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A STRANGE STORY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MY NOVEL," "RIENZI," &c.

CHAPTER XXII.

THAT evening I went to Mrs. Poyntz's; it was one of her ordinary "reception nights," and I felt that she would naturally expect my attendance as 'a proper attention.'

I joined a group engaged in general conversation, of which Mrs. Poyntz herself made the centre, knitting, as usual, rapidly while she talked, slowly when she listened.

Without mentioning the visit I had paid that morning, I turned the conversation on the different country places in the neighbourhood, and then incidentally asked, "What sort of a man is Sir Philip Derval? Is it not strange that he should suffer so fine a place to fall into decay?" The answers I received added little to the information I had already obtained. Mrs. Poyntz knew nothing of Sir Philip Derval, except as a man of large estates, whose rental had been greatly increased by a rise in the value of property he possessed in the town of L—, and which lay contiguous to that of her husband. Two or three of the older inhabitants of the Hill had remembered him in his early days, when he was gay, high-spirited, hospitable, lavish. One observed that the only person in L— whom he had admitted to his subsequent seclusion was Dr. Lloyd, who was then without practice, and whom he had employed as an assistant in certain chemical experiments.

Here a gentleman struck into the conversation. He was a stranger to me and to L—, a visitor to one of the dwellers on the Hill, who had asked leave to present him to its Queen as a great traveller and an accomplished antiquarian.

Said this gentleman: "Sir Philip Derval! I know him. I met him in the East. He was then, still, I believe, very fond of chemical science; a clever, odd, philanthropical man; had studied medicine, or at least practised it; was said to have made many marvellous cures. I became acquainted with him in Aleppo. He had come to that town, not much frequented by English travellers, in order to inquire into the murder of two men, of whom one was his friend and the other his countryman.

"This is interesting," said Mrs. Poyntz, dryly. "We who live on this innocent Hill all love stories of crime; murder is the pleasantest

subject you could have hit on. Pray give us the details."

"So encouraged," said the traveller, good humouredly, "I will not hesitate to communicate the little I know. In Aleppo, there had lived for some years a man who was held by the natives in great reverence. He had the reputation of extraordinary wisdom, but was difficult of access; the lively imagination of the Orientals invested his character with the fascinations of fable; in short, Haroun of Aleppo was popularly considered a magician. Wild stories were told of his powers, of his preternatural age, of his hoarded treasures. Apart from such disputable titles to homage, there seemed no question, from all I heard, that his learning was considerable, his charities extensive, his manner of life irreproachably ascetic. He appears to have resembled those Arabian sages of the Gothic age to whom modern science is largely indebted—a mystic enthusiast but an earnest scholar. A wealthy and singular Englishman, long resident in another part of the East, afflicted by some languishing disease, took a journey to Aleppo to consult this sage, who, among his other acquirements, was held to have discovered rare secrets in medicine—his countrymen said in 'charms.' One morning, not long after the Englishman's arrival, Haroun was found dead in his bed, apparently strangled, and the Englishman, who lodged in another part of the town, had disappeared; but some of his clothes, and a crutch on which he habitually supported himself, were found a few miles distant from Aleppo near the roadside. There appeared no doubt that he, too, had been murdered, but his corpse could not be discovered. Sir Philip Derval had been a loving disciple of this Sage of Aleppo, to whom he assured me he owed not only that knowledge of medicine which, by report, Sir Philip possessed, but the insight into various truths of nature, on the promulgation of which it was evident Sir Philip cherished the ambition to found a philosophical celebrity for himself."

"Of what description were those truths of nature?" I asked, somewhat sarcastically.

"Sir, I am unable to tell you, for Sir Philip did not inform me, nor did I much care to ask, for what may be revered as truths in Asia are usually despised as dreams in Europe. To return to my story. Sir Philip had been in Aleppo a little time before the murder; had left the Englishman under the care of Haroun; he

returned to Aleppo on hearing the tragic events I have related, and was busied in collecting such evidence as could be gleaned, and instituting inquiries after our missing countryman at the time that I myself chanced to arrive in the city. I assisted in his researches, but without avail. The assassins remained undiscovered. I do not myself doubt that they were mere vulgar robbers. Sir Philip had a darker suspicion, of which he made no secret to me, but as I confess that I thought the suspicion groundless, you will pardon me if I do not repeat it. Whether, since I left the East, the Englishman's remains have been discovered, I know not. Very probably; for I understand that his heirs have got hold of what fortune he left—less than was generally supposed. But it was reported that he had buried great treasures, a rumour, however absurd, not altogether inconsistent with his character."

"What was his character?" asked Mrs. Poyntz.

"One of evil and sinister repute. He was regarded with terror by the attendants who had accompanied him to Aleppo. But he had lived in a very remote part of the East, little known to Europeans, and, from all I could learn, had there established an extraordinary power, strengthened by superstitious awe. He was said to have studied deeply that knowledge which the philosophers of old called 'occult,' not, like the Sage of Aleppo, for benevolent, but for malignant ends. He was accused of conferring with evil spirits, and filling his barbaric court (for he lived in a kind of savage royalty) with charmers and sorcerers. I suspect, after all, that he was only like myself, an ardent antiquarian, and cunningly made use of the fear he inspired in order to secure his authority, and prosecute, in safety, researches into ancient sepulchres or temples. His great passion was, indeed, in excavating such remains in his neighbourhood, with what result I know not, never having penetrated so far into regions infested by robbers and pestiferous with malaria. He wore the Eastern dress, and always carried jewels about him. I came to the conclusion that for the sake of these jewels he was murdered, perhaps by some of his own servants, who then at once buried his body, and kept their own secret. He was old, very infirm; could never have got far from the town without assistance."

"You have not yet told us his name," said Mrs. Poyntz.

"His name was Grayle."

"Grayle!" exclaimed Mrs. Poyntz, dropping her work, "Louis Grayle?"

"Yes; Louis Grayle. You could not have known him?"

"Known him! No. But I have often heard my father speak of him. Such, then, was the tragic end of that strong dark creature, for whom, as a young girl in the nursery, I used to feel a kind of fearful admiring interest?"

"It is your turn to narrate now," said the traveller.

And we all drew closer round our hostess, who remained silent some moments, her brow thoughtful, her work suspended.

"Well," said she, at last, looking round us with a lofty air, which seemed half defying, "force and courage are always fascinating, even when they are quite in the wrong. I go with the world, because the world goes with me; if it did not——" Here she stopped for a moment, clenched the firm white hand, and then scornfully waved it, left the sentence unfinished, and broke into another.

"Going with the world, of course we must march over those who stand against it. But when one man stands single-handed against our march, we do not despise him; it is enough to crush. I am very glad I did not see Louis Grayle when I was a girl of sixteen." Again she paused a moment—and resumed: "Louis Grayle was the only son of an usurer, infamous for the rapacity with which he had acquired enormous wealth. Old Grayle desired to rear his heir as a gentleman; sent him to Eton; boys are always aristocratic; his birth was soon thrown in his teeth; he was fierce; he struck boys bigger than himself—fought till he was half-killed. My father was at school with him; described him as a tiger whelp. One day he—still a fag—struck a sixth form boy. Sixth form boys do not fight fags; they punish them. Louis Grayle was ordered to hold out his hand to the cane; he received the blow, drew forth his schoolboy knife, and stabbed the punisher. After that, he left Eton. I don't think he was publicly expelled—too mere a child for that honour—but he was taken or sent away: educated with great care under the first masters at home; when he was of age to enter the University, old Grayle was dead. Louis was sent by his guardians to Cambridge, with acquirements far exceeding the average of young men, and with unlimited command of money. My father was at the same college, and described him again—haughty, quarrelsome, reckless, handsome, aspiring, brave. Does that kind of creature interest you my dears?" (appealing to the ladies).

"La!" said Miss Brabazon; "a horrid usurer's son!"

"Ay, true; the vulgar proverb says it is good to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth; so it is when one has one's own family crest on it; but when it is a spoon on which people recognise their family crest, and cry out, 'Stolen from our plate chest,' it is a heritage that outlaws a babe in his cradle. However, young men at college who want money are less scrupulous about descent than boys at Eton are. Louis Grayle found, while at college, plenty of well-born acquaintances willing to recover from him some of the plunder his father had extorted from theirs. He was too wild to distinguish himself by academical honours, but my father said that the tutors of the college declared there were not six undergraduates in the University who knew as much hard and dry science as wild Louis Grayle. He went into the world, no doubt, hoping to shine; but his father's name

was too notorious to admit the son into good society. The Polite World, it is true, does not examine a scutcheon with the nice eye of a herald, nor look upon riches with the stately contempt of a stoic—still the Polite World has its family pride and its moral sentiment. It does not like to be cheated—I mean, in money matters—and when the son of the man who has emptied its purse and foreclosed on its acres, rides by its club windows, hand on haunch, and head in the air, no lion has a scowl more awful, no hyæna a laugh more dread, than that same easy, good-tempered, tolerant, polite, well-bred world which is so pleasant an acquaintance, so languid a friend, and—so remorseless an enemy. In short, Louis Grayle claimed the right to be courted—he was shunned; to be admired—he was loathed. Even his old college acquaintances were shamed out of knowing him. Perhaps he could have lived through all this, had he sought to glide quietly into position; but he wanted the tact of the well-bred, and strove to storm his way, not to steal it. Reduced for companions to needy parasites, he braved and he shocked all decorous opinion by that ostentation of excess, which made Richelieu and Lauzun the rage. But then Richelieu and Lauzun were dukes! He now very naturally took the Polite World into hate—gave it scorn for scorn. He would ally himself with Democracy; his wealth could not get him into a club, but it would buy him into parliament; he could not be a Lauzun, nor, perhaps, a Mirabeau; but he might be a Danton. He had plenty of knowledge and audacity, and with knowledge and audacity a good hater is sure to be eloquent. Possibly, then, this poor Louis Grayle might have made a great figure, left his mark on his age and his name in history; but in contesting the borough which he was sure to carry, he had to face an opponent in a real fine gentleman whom his father had ruined, cool and high bred, with a tongue like a rapier, a sneer like an adder. A quarrel of course; Louis Grayle sent a challenge. The fine gentleman, known to be no coward (fine gentlemen never are), was at first disposed to refuse with contempt. But Grayle had made himself the idol of the mob; and at a word from Grayle the fine gentleman might have been ducked at a pump, or tossed in a blanket—that would have made him ridiculous—to be shot at is a trifle, to be laughed at is serious. He therefore condescended to accept the challenge, and my father was his second.

"It was settled, of course, according to English custom, that both combatants should fire at the same time, and by signal. The antagonist fired at the right moment; his ball grazed Louis Grayle's temple. Louis Grayle had not fired. He now seemed to the seconds to take slow and deliberate aim. They called out to him not to fire—they were rushing to prevent him—when the trigger was pulled and his opponent fell dead on the field. The fight was, therefore, considered unfair; Louis Grayle was tried for his life; he did not stand the trial in person.

He escaped to the Continent; hurried on to some distant uncivilised lands; could not be traced; reappeared in England no more. The lawyer who conducted his defence pleaded skillfully. He argued that the delay in firing was not intentional, therefore not criminal—the effect of the stun which the wound in the temple had occasioned. The judge was a gentleman, and summed up the evidence so as to direct the jury to a verdict against the low wretch who had murdered a gentleman. But the jurors were not gentlemen, and Grayle's advocate had of course excited their sympathy for a son of the people whom a gentleman had wantonly insulted—the verdict was manslaughter. But the sentence emphatically marked the aggravated nature of the homicide—three years' imprisonment. Grayle eluded the prison, but he was a man disgraced and an exile; his ambition blasted, his career an outlaw's, and his age not yet twenty-three. My father said that he was supposed to have changed his name; none knew what had become of him. And so in his old age this creature, brilliant and daring, whom if born under better auspices we might now be all fawning on, cringing to—after living to old age, no one knows how—dies, murdered at Aleppo, no one, you say, knows by whom."

"I saw some account of his death in the papers about three years ago," said one of the party, "but the name was misspelt, and I had no idea that it was the same man who had fought the duel which Mrs. Colonel Poyntz has so graphically described. I have a vague recollection of the trial; it took place when I was a boy, more than forty years since. The affair made a stir at the time, but was soon forgotten."

"Soon forgotten," said Mrs. Poyntz; "ay, what is not? Leave your place in the world for ten minutes, and when you come back somebody else has taken it: but when you leave the world for good who remembers that you had ever a place even in the parish register!"

"Nevertheless," said I, "a great poet has said, finely and truly,

The sun of Homer shines upon us still."

"But it does not shine upon Homer; and learned folks tell me that we know no more who and what Homer was; if there was ever a single Homer at all, or rather a whole herd of Homers, than we know about the man in the moon—if there be one man there, or a million. Now, my dear Miss Brabazon, it will be very kind in you to divert our thoughts into channels less gloomy. Some pretty French air—Dr. Fenwick, I have something to say to you." She drew me towards the window. "So, Anne Ashleigh writes me word that I am not to mention your engagement. Do you think it quite prudent to keep it a secret?"

"I do not see how prudence is concerned in keeping it secret one way or the other—it is a mere matter of feeling. Most people wish to abridge, as far as they can, the time in which their private arrangements are the topic of public gossip."

"Public gossip is sometimes the best security for the due completion of private arrangements. As long as a girl is not known to be engaged, her betrothed must be prepared for rivals. Announce the engagement, and rivals are warned off."

"I fear no rivals."

"Do you not? Bold man! I suppose you will write to Lilian?"

"Certainly."

"Do so, and constantly. By the way, Mrs. Ashleigh, before she went, asked me to send her back Lady Haughton's letter of invitation. What for? to show to you?"

"Very likely. Have you the letter still? May I see it?"

"Not just at present. When Lilian or Mrs. Ashleigh write to you, come and tell me how they like their visit, and what other guests form the party."

Therewith she turned away and conversed apart with the traveller.

Her words disquieted me, and I felt that they were meant to do so. Wherefore, I could not guess. But there is no language on earth which has more words with a double meaning than that spoken by the Clever Woman, who is never so guarded as when she appears to be frank.

As I walked home thoughtfully, I was accosted by a young man, the son of one of the wealthiest merchants in the town. I had attended him with success, some months before, in a rheumatic fever; he and his family were much attached to me.

"Ah, my dear Fenwick, I am so glad to see you; I owe you an obligation of which you are not aware—an exceedingly pleasant travelling companion. I came with him to-day from London, where I have been sight-seeing and holiday-making for the last fortnight."

"I suppose you mean that you kindly bring me a patient?"

"No, only an admirer. I was staying at Fenton's Hotel. It so happened one day that I had left in the coffee-room your last work on the Vital Principle, which, by-the-by, the bookseller assures me is selling immensely among readers as non-professional as myself. Coming into the coffee-room again I found a gentleman reading it. I claimed it politely; he as politely tendered his excuse for taking it. We made acquaintance on the spot. The next day we were intimate. He expressed great interest and curiosity about your theory and your experiments. I told him I knew you. You may guess if I described you as less clever in your practice than you are in your writings. And, in short, he came with me to L—, partly to see our flourishing town, principally on my promise to introduce him to you. My mother, you know, has what she calls a *déjeuner* tomorrow; *déjeuner* and dance. You will be there?"

"Thank you for reminding me of her invitation. I will avail myself of it if I can. Your new friend will be present? Who and what is he? A medical student?"

"No, a mere gentleman at ease; but seems to have a good deal of general information. Very young; apparently very rich; wonderfully good-looking. I am sure you will like him; everybody must."

"It is quite enough to prepare me to like him, that he is a friend of yours." And so we shook hands and parted.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It was late in the afternoon of the following day before I was able to join the party assembled at the merchant's house; it was a villa about two miles out of the town, pleasantly situated, amidst flower-gardens celebrated in the neighbourhood for their beauty. The breakfast had been long over; the company was scattered over the lawn; some formed into a dance on the smooth lawn; some seated under shady awnings; others gliding amidst parterres, in which all the glow of colour took a glory yet more vivid under the flush of a brilliant sunshine, and the ripple of a soft western breeze. Music, loud and lively, mingled with the laughter of happy children, who formed much the larger number of the party.

Standing at the entrance of an arched trellis, that led from the hardier flowers of the lawn to a rare collection of tropical plants under a lofty glass dome (connecting, as it were, the familiar vegetation of the North with that of the remotest East), was a form that instantaneously caught and fixed my gaze. The entrance of the arcade was covered with parasite creepers, in prodigal luxuriance, of variegated gorgeous tints—scarlet, golden, purple—and the form, an idealised picture of man's youth fresh from the hand of Nature, stood literally in a frame of blooms. Never have I seen human face so radiant as that young man's.

There was in the aspect an indescribable something that literally dazzled. As one continued to gaze, it was with surprise, one was forced to acknowledge that in the features themselves there was no faultless regularity; nor was the young man's stature imposing—about the middle height. But the effect of the whole was not less transcendent. Large eyes, unspeakably lustrous; a most harmonious colouring; an expression of contagious animation and joyousness; and the form itself so critically fine, that the welded strength of its sinews was best shown in the lightness and grace of its movements.

He was resting one hand carelessly on the golden locks of a child that had nestled itself against his knees, looking up in his face, in that silent loving wonder, with which children regard something too strangely beautiful for noisy admiration; he himself was conversing with the host, an old grey-haired gouty man, propped on his crutch-stick, and listening with a look of mournful envy. To the wealth of the old man all the flowers in that garden owed their renewed delight in the summer air and sun. Oh, that his wealth could renew to himself one hour of the youth that stood beside

him, lord, indeed, of Creation; its splendour woven into his crown of beauty, its enjoyments subject to his sceptre of hope and gladness!

I was startled by the hearty voice of the merchant's son: "Ah, my dear Fenwick, I was afraid you would not come—you are late. There is the new friend of whom I spoke to you last night; let me now make you acquainted with him." He drew my arm in his and led me up to the young man, where he stood under the arching flowers, and whom he then introduced to me by the name of Margrave.

Nothing could be more frankly cordial than Mr. Margrave's manner. In a few minutes I found myself conversing with him familiarly, as if we had been reared in the same home, and sported together in the same playground. His vein of talk was peculiar, off hand, careless, shifting from topic to topic, with a bright rapidity.

He said that he liked the place; proposed to stay in it some weeks; asked my address, which I gave to him; promised to call soon at an early hour, while my time was yet free from professional visits. I endeavoured, when I went away, to analyse to myself the fascination which this young stranger so notably exercised over all who approached him; and it seemed to me, ever seeking to find material causes for all moral effects, that it arose from the contagious vitality of that rarest of all rare gifts in highly civilised circles—perfect health; that health which is in itself the most exquisite luxury; which, finding happiness in the mere sense of existence, diffuses round it, like an atmosphere, the harmless hilarity of its bright animal being. Health, to the utmost perfection, is seldom known after childhood; health to the utmost cannot be enjoyed by those who overwork the brain, or admit the sure wear and tear of the passions. The creature I had just seen gave me the notion of youth in the golden age of the poets—the youth of the careless Arcadian, before nymph or shepherdess had vexed his heart with a sigh.

SUTTEE IN CHINA.

THE Indian Suttee, or voluntary sacrifice of a living wife by burning on one pyre with the corpse of her husband, is abolished throughout the British dominions, and is supposed to be rare in the outlying provinces. The act of self-immolation was often most determined. Of one widow it is said that she not only set at nought all admonitions to relent from her purpose, but that she put a finger into the fire and held it there for some time as a proof of fortitude; also, that she took up some of the fire with one hand, to place it in the other, where she held it while she sprinkled incense on it to fumigate the attendant Brahmins. We have all heard of the custom of Suttee, while the existence of a similar practice in China is almost unknown in England, unknown even to many Englishmen in China who have resided there for years. Of such a scene of public self-immolation by a Chinese widow, I, writing now at Foo-Chow-Foo in the

month of January, eighteen hundred and sixty-one, was a few days ago an eye-witness.

The Chinese Suttee, when it occurs, is the self-sacrifice of widows, who are also orphans and childless; who consider themselves useless, and, as it were, lost in the world; and who seek death, not only as a means to show their affection for the deceased husband, but of escape from the evils of a very wretched and isolated position. It is commonly a suicide of the desperate, put forth as a public and glorious act of devotion. Highly praised by Chinese moralists, both ancient and modern, many instances of this kind of solemn self-destruction are recorded in history and romance, though of late years there has been scant resort to it in practice.

There is a small book—uncivily small—purporting to be the history of all the celebrated beauties of China. The work is arranged in divisions, each of which contains the lives of those ladies notorious for some particular virtue or vice, whether for chastity or its opposite, for heroism physical or moral, for kindly gratitude or cruel hate. The woman whom the Chinese author thought entitled to the first place in esteem, was one whose story is as follows:

Her husband was a private soldier in the imperial army. On his return from service, away from his comrades, in a distant province, he was told by his wife how, during his absence, she had been annoyed by the persecutions of the officer of his regiment. The poor soldier sought then to revenge himself on the libertine by taking his life. He failed in the attempt, and military law claimed his own life as penalty for the attack on a superior. In vain he pleaded provocation; justice was inexorable, and, despite the intercessions of his friends, he was condemned to die. His loving wife, on seeing how sad a calamity her beauty had brought upon her unoffending spouse, determined that since she could not save him she would not survive him. She provided, therefore, for the welfare of her two children by selling them into the families of wealthy neighbours where she knew they would be well cared for. This done, she went to a rapid stream, and, casting herself in where the current was strongest, perished beneath the waters. Now followed her reward. The current, though so strong, refused to convey her body from the spot at which her act of piety had been performed, and there it was soon discovered by the passers-by, who reported to the district magistrate the miracle of a dead body lying unmoved on a running river. This officer, at once hastening to the river-side, took charge of the corpse. A statement was then laid before the higher authorities, and a further investigation made. The end of it was that the condemned soldier was pardoned, a public funeral was granted to the wife, and an arch, inscribed with the words "Ardently chaste," was erected to her honourable memory. Moreover, the children were returned to the arms of their father, and he, feeling the deep debt of gratitude which he owed to his virtuous partner, refrained for his whole life from contracting any other mar-

riage, lest he should weaken the tender remembrance of one who had proved herself so faithful to his interests.

This is one among many stories of the kind in Chinese literature. But, without any more reference to books, I will proceed to show how a sacrifice is managed in our own times, by relating the facts of the tragedy enacted before my own eyes in the neighbourhood of Foo-Chow-Foo.

The first notification I had of what was about to take place was the parading of a handsome wedding chair about that suburb of the provincial capital in which our foreign settlement is situated. The chair was accompanied by all the poms and gaieties of a wedding—music, gay streamers, and so forth. There was, however, one thing most unusual in this procession. The occupant of the chair was exposed to public gaze, instead of being, as in weddings is invariably the case, closely screened. On making inquiry among our Chinese servants as to what this extraordinary departure from established customs might portend, I was informed that the lady was no bride, but a disconsolate widow, recently bereaved, who, finding herself unprovided for and unprotected, and having, moreover, neither father nor mother, son nor daughter, father-in-law nor mother-in-law, was determined upon following her husband to the unknown world, where she might serve and wait upon him as became his dutiful and loving wife. Having accordingly made known her intention to her friends, and having fixed the day for her departure, she was now taking leave of all she knew, and parading the streets as a pattern to her sex. The object of her death being to rejoin her husband, the ceremony was a sort of wedding; she was arrayed and adorned as a bride, and seated in a wedding chair.

I ascertained the time and place appointed for the closing ceremony, and on the morning of Wednesday, the 16th of January, proceeded, accompanied by two friends, to a spot some four miles distant from Nantae, the seat of the foreign settlement and southern suburb of Foo-Chow-Foo.

Everybody we passed appeared as well acquainted with the object of our journey as we ourselves were. As we approached the scene of action we found ourselves in a stream of people, chiefly women and girls, the greater part of whom were small footed, and were hobbling along leaning one against another for support, or assisting their tottering footsteps, by means of the shoulders of dutiful sons or brothers.

We arrived only just in time to see the chair of the victim carried on the ground, and herself ascend the scaffold which had been prepared for her. The chair was the bridal chair in which she had been carried about the streets; and the scaffold consisted of two stages, one raised a few feet from the ground, and the other about a foot higher. The whole was covered with a dark cloth canopy, supported by a framework of bamboos, within which was set a gallows of one very thick cross piece of bamboo, fastened at either end to a strong upright pole.

From this bamboo, under the canopy, and exactly in the middle of the scaffold, hung the fatal rope, covered with a red silk napkin; beneath it was set a chair, to enable the devotee to reach the noose. On the lower platform, was a table of choice meats and vegetables, at which she was to take her last meal in the land of the living. The table was surrounded by the woman's friends, dressed in holiday costumes, and wearing the red cap of Chinese officials. In former times it was the custom for two district magistrates to be in attendance on all these occasions; but since the higher authorities were hoaxed, some years ago, by a lady whose courage failed her at the last moment, they have refused to be present at such exhibitions, and now despatch an inferior officer to superintend the arrangements.

The scaffold was raised in the midst of a large expanse of fields, at the time lying fallow, and was surrounded by a crowd numbering some thousands. Benches from which a better view could be had, were so much in demand, that we were obliged to pay a dollar (four and ninepence) before we could obtain one for myself and another for my companion; I use the singular number, because we had lost the third member of our party in the crowd.

The chief actress in this extraordinary scene appeared at first to be far less excited than any one in the vast concourse assembled. She was dressed in red bridal robes, richly embroidered with coloured silk, and her head was adorned with a handsome gilt coronet. Her decidedly plain face betrayed not the slightest emotion, and she sat down at the table with as much apparent good will as if it had been her bridal, rather than her funeral, feast. While she was eating, we made some inquiries among the crowd, and ascertained, in addition to the fact of her being childless, that she was twenty-five years of age, and that her only surviving relations were a brother in poor circumstances, and his infant child, her nephew. We were further informed that she had resided in a village which was pointed out to us at a little distance from the spot.

After the lapse of about half an hour, the poor woman having apparently satisfied her appetite, rose from her seat, and, still standing on the lower platform, addressed the surrounding crowd in a set speech, thanking them for their attendance, and explaining why she acted as she did. When she had finished speaking, she took from a bowl on the table, several handfuls of uncooked rice, which she scattered among the crowd, and eager was the scramble to get a few grains as her virtuous blessing. This done, she fondled her baby nephew, and bade an affectionate farewell to her brother, who stood by her on the scaffold; then, stepping upon the upper stage of the platform, she bowed gracefully to the surrounding multitude, and addressed to them a few last words. It struck me at this moment that she might be under the influence of opium, for her laughing countenance and rapid gestures were too highly excited, to be natural, except under the influence of some such stimulants. It

is right to add, that the gaiety was clearly not assumed.

She was helped to mount the high chair placed under the rope, but the rope proving to be still beyond her reach, her brother stepped forward and held her up in his arms, while she with her own hands passed the fatal noose over her head and adjusted the cruel slip-knot to the back of her neck. The red silk napkin was then placed over her face, and a handkerchief fastened to her right hand. At a signal given by herself, her brother stepped back and left her suspended in mid air. She then, shaking her joined hands before her breast, "chained" the crowd: her own weight causing her to turn round and round, so that persons on all sides received her parting salutations. The spectators had, up to the fatal moment, been laughing and chattering as if assembled at a village fair; but now there was perfect stillness, as every ear was strained and every eye intent. In two or three minutes the action of the hands, at first decided and regular, grew weaker and weaker, and finally ceased altogether; then followed a convulsive shudder of the tiny feet (not above three inches in length), and all was over.

The body was allowed to remain suspended for about a quarter of an hour, when it was cut down and placed in a common covered palanquin, which was in waiting: the bridal chair having been removed. The rope which had been the instrument of death, was now cut into small pieces and distributed among the friends on the scaffold, all struggling violently to obtain a portion. The chair and the corpse were carried to a small temple about a hundred yards from the spot, followed by a terrific rush of people anxious to obtain another glimpse of the lifeless clay. My friend, who was somewhat sceptical of the reality of the transaction, forced his way into the temple, and witnessed the removal of the corpse from the chair. He returned, painfully satisfied that no deception had been practised: the poor girl's swollen and blackened face bearing unmistakable testimony to the manner of her death.

I have since been informed that had her mother-in-law been alive, she would have been in attendance, and that it would have been her duty to help in forcing the soul from its earthly tenement by grasping the feet of her daughter, and adding her strength to the weight already bearing on the rope.

It is worthy of note that, although the greater part of those present were, as I have said, females, yet the only sense of pity or dread that I saw shown in any way, was on the part of one of three Canton women who stood near us, and whose dress and manner showed but too plainly the position they held in Foo-Chow. At the moment the victim was left to herself on the rope, this girl, unable to endure the sight, crouched on the ground, and buried her face in her handkerchief: while others, holding respected stations in society, were tearless and unmoved.

I have since heard that a costly funeral will be granted to the remains of the devotee, at the public expense; an arch will be erected to her memory, as to the memory of the soldier's wife in the story, in order that the bright example of her virtue may be impressed upon others, and may receive the praise of future generations.

As to the real nature of this dreadful transaction, I cannot help looking upon it rather as an act of determined suicide than as an instance of extraordinary and superstitious devotion. The woman was evidently in a low station of life, and on the death of her husband was left absolutely destitute and unprotected. Her small feet would prevent her from gaining a living by field labour, or any work of a like nature, while her unprepossessing face left her no chance of being purchased into the harem of any man of wealth. In England, a country abounding with the rich and generous, and furnished with a poor-law, such a desolate condition would be bad enough; but in China, where the wounded deer is invariably either driven from the herd, or gored to death, it is far more miserable. The choice lay between abject life as a drudge, and triumphant death as a saint—and the woman preferred the latter.

THIS SHEET OF PAPER.

My parents, natives of Livonia, were originally settled near Riga. About a year before my birth they emigrated to Belgium, with a vast number of their relatives, and established themselves in the neighbourhood of Courtrai, where—on the broad plain watered by the river Lys—I first felt the breath of air. My family name, Latinised, according to a prevalent custom, was Linum, but the honest Flemings amongst whom my earliest days were spent preferred calling me Vlas, which, with a very slight alteration, becomes, in English, Flax. Though not very tall, my height being under two feet, I was greatly admired for my slender figure and general elegance of appearance, and I must do my Flemish nurses the justice to say that, during my infancy, they took the greatest care of me, and did their best to train me in an upright manner. A selfish motive was, without doubt, at the bottom of this treatment; but, as it made me strong and healthy, I suppose I must not complain. I had a great many brothers and sisters, all born at the same time as myself, and treated in every respect like me; so completely, indeed, were our fortunes identified in after life, that I necessarily include their adventures in relating my own.

A great poet has told of the cruelties which, in his tender age, were practised on the renowned John Barleycorn. Those inflicted upon us, after the first period of delusive kindness was past, would not fall short by comparison. Torn from our mother's bosom, we were huddled together in groups, and exposed to the wind and sun until all the moisture in us was evaporated. We were then carried into rude sheds, and treated with great barbarity, some of us

being subjected to the torture of an iron comb, and others stretched on a board and beaten with a flat wooden bat, till our capsules were all removed and nothing was left of us but the dry stems on which they grew. Collected into bundles, we were then, without the least regard to our own convenience, set up alternately on our heads and tails, and closely jammed into a large oaken frame, which was sunk in the river Lys, heavy stones being placed upon us to keep us down. Here we remained until, in the language of our persecutors, we were thoroughly "steeped"—a heartless word for expressing our pitiful noyade. Removed from the water, our ligatures were taken off, comparative liberty was allowed us, and we were spread upon the grass. But we had not been there long, before our tormentors were at us again, pushing us about with long thin rods, and not suffering us to enjoy a moment's rest, except when they themselves went to bed. After about a fortnight of this treatment, we were taken under cover and broken into four, and stuck into narrow slits, and "scuteched" (as they call it) with wooden swords; and, as if this were not enough, they "heckled" us with a square piece of wood studded with rows of iron teeth about four inches long, scratching and scarifying our fibre until not a particle of manly roughness remained in our composition. They then said that we were "finished"—by which they meant marketable—and on the very first opportunity, not being able to devise any more tortures, or do us any further harm, they sold us to a linen-manufacturer, who lost no time in converting us into the substance in which he dealt. The process we were now submitted to, if less cruel than the first, was equally tedious and annoying; and after having been drawn, doubled, carded, roved, and spun, we finally assumed the texture which, under the name of linen, plays so important a part in all well-regulated households. As my personal fibre—if I may be allowed the expression—was of a far robuster nature than that of any of my companions, I shall henceforward speak of myself only, in describing our subsequent career.

I never knew exactly how the transfer took place—being sewn up for some time in a coarse packing-cloth—but one morning the bale to which I belonged came down with a heavy thump on what I have since learnt was a counter in a merchant's warehouse in Paris; and before I could recover from my surprise—and I may add, from the pain I felt—I heard voices chaffering over my body, like the Greeks and Trojans contending for the corpse of Patroclus. A bargain was being struck between the warehouseman and the retail dealer, and the result was my removal to the shop of the latter, where, one fine day, I was cut up into lengths and carried off by a porter to the establishment of Mademoiselle Clotilde, a celebrated seamstress, whose sign was the Toison d'Or, in the Rue de la Paix. They were a merry, hard-working lot the courtièreres over whom Mademoiselle Clotilde presided, and if martyrdom could at any time be

made pleasant to the sufferers, I, for one, might have enjoyed being made a martyr under the sharp scissors and needles of the lively chattering damsels, whose province it was to convert me and my relatives into shirts.

An English nobleman, called by Mademoiselle Clotilde, "Milor," and nothing else, had long been a customer at the "Toison d'Or," and, passing through Paris after a long journey, during which his stock of linen had become greatly reduced—let us say through the negligence of washerwomen, without accusing his valet—found it necessary to give an order for an immediate supply. Milor, who paid handsomely, required garments of the very finest quality, and I (speaking collectively) was the article destined to adorn his person. My particular maker was a girl named Aglaé, a fine tall Brugeoise, with a large share of the beauty which is the peculiar inheritance of her townswomen—the only women, by the way, who can boast of beauty in my native Flanders—and I confess it was with something like a pang—for shirts are often as sensitive as the hearts they cover—that I felt for the last time the pressure of her slender fingers and quitted the lap on which I had happily reposed, to take my place in the wardrobe of Milor. I had been admirably "got up" by the blanchisseuse whom Mademoiselle Clotilde employed, and unsunned snow was not whiter than my delicate form, as, with swan-like bosom, proudly displayed, over which floated a cloud-like frill of transparent muslin—a collar full six inches high, and sharp all round as the edge of the exterminating instrument of Monsieur de Paris—and my arms somewhat singularly folded behind my back, I lay on the top of my companions; white, I repeat, as Alpine snow, but as cold as that which rests on the herbless granite. Excuse fine writing at this point of my story, for I am thinking of Aglaé, and contrasting her joyous society with the splendid misery of being for ever after associated with the dull, heavy, pompous, unintelligent, obstinate old nobleman whose property I became. "For ever after," do I say? No, thank goodness, not that exactly, but long enough in all conscience, if I had not been a remarkably smart piece of linen, to have made me as dull, heavy, pompous, unintelligent and obstinate as himself.

That these epithets are not misplaced will, I think, be admitted by every candid person in these enlightened days, when I state that my proprietor was perhaps the most thorough-going Tory that ever sat in the House of Lords, the most determined placeman, the most uncompromising sinecurist, and the most resolute foe that ever breathed to everything that wore a look of change. His political creed—he had been born in that creed, and in that creed he meant to die, on the floor, too, of the august House of which he was a member, if necessary—was taxation: that is to say, taxation of all the necessities of life; for on its luxuries he looked with an indulgent eye. If his advice had been taken—and he very frequently offered it, un-

asked, in the form which, in "a certain place," is called "a speech"—he would have no such things as taxes on hair-powder, armorial bearings, hounds, race-horses, carriages, dice, or playing-cards; these he considered dangerous fiscal innovations, or, at best, unwise concessions; but taxes on food, and light, and clothing, on all that most affects the hard-working community, for these he lent his voice with the heartiest good will, and the minister whose budget most severely ground the faces of the poor, was always sure of the support of Lord Millstone. He was not, however, a man with only one idea, though what follows may be thought by many merely the complement of his political character, and not a distinct feature; he detested "freedom of opinion," whether written or spoken, but chiefly written, that is to say printed. A radical orator was, naturally, Lord Millstone's aversion; but he had no words to express his abhorrence of a radical newspaper.

Some fragments have been preserved of a speech of his which show how strong this feeling was in him. It was on the occasion of the great privilege question, when Type, the famous printer, was brought before the bar of the House of Lords and sentenced to a fine of five hundred pounds and twelve months' imprisonment for having made a noble lord speak sense in a previous debate, whereas the noble lord had spoken quite the contrary. The point was one that touched Lord Millstone nearly. He accordingly rose and said:

"I can conceive nothing more fatal to the authority of your lordships' House—and I need not say if that authority be sapped, what must be the consequences, not only to this realm, but to the world at large—nothing more fatal, I repeat, to that authority than the substitution for your lordships' language of the words of a common person like the culprit, whose unauthorised, and, I may say, daring interference with your lordships' privileges we are here to arraign. It is not the least amongst the evils which, in our legislative capacity, we are called upon to combat, and, by the assistance of Divine Providence, to eradicate—evils which have their source, as most of your lordships are aware, in the pernicious doctrines that were disseminated by the French revolution. (Loud cheers from three Tory peers, not quite deaf enough to lose this point, Lord Millstone's perpetual illustration.) It is not, I say (Lord Millstone was given to repetition), the least amongst the evils against which we have to fight, that a system of ideas is at present abroad,—encouraged, I grieve to say, by those whose rank and station, and whose duty to—to—society—and to—themselves, should teach them a widely different lesson,—which tends to reduce everything above it to its own vulgar level. (More cheers from the three Tory peers.) Can anything, my lords, be more monstrous, more insulting, more subversive of all that is right-minded and—proper, than this attempt to control the prescriptive and constitutional right of your lordships' House to utter their sentiments in what-

ever way your lordships please? I vote, therefore, in favour of my noble friend's proposition."

Of the pleasures of Paris, the subject of so much animated talk on the part of Aglaë and her companions, I had no experience; for very shortly after I was sold to Lord Millstone he returned to England. He travelled post, but I saw nothing of the country; indeed, I could scarcely hear the oaths of the postilions, being shut up in a large imperial on the top of my lord's carriage; nor did I see the light again until my prison door was thrown open at the Dover custom-house. With a peer of the realm, and such a peer as Lord Millstone, the examination was a mere ceremony; to touch anything marked with a coronet being thought, at that time, far too awful a sacrilege to enter the mind of a custom-house officer. It would have been as much as his place was worth, to have dared to lift me from the spot where I was lying; though had there been a functionary sufficiently resolute and evil-minded to dip his hand deep enough down, his courage, or his malevolence, would have been rewarded by the discovery of as much lace as would have made an ordinary smuggler's fortune. "My lord's wearing apparel!" said the solemn valet who stood by at the "search;" and straightway the searcher shrunk back aghast, the lid of the imperial was clapped down, and the hieroglyphic in chalk affixed, which declared that the custom-house examination had been duly made. Except for the fact that he had plenty of room, Lord Millstone almost went out of his way to smuggle lace in his personal baggage, for the ambassador's bag was at his service in Paris to send anything he liked to the Foreign-office in London, whence it would be forwarded to his own house without the slightest delay; but perhaps he thought that the delicate fabric would run less risk of being rumpled when carefully stowed away with his own effects, or he might have liked to indulge afterwards in the easy boast of having outwitted "a set of fellows," who were much too deferential, and, it may be added, too ready to pocket a guinea, to give his lordship the slightest trouble. Be this as it may, the lace was my bed, and in it I travelled to Grosvenor-square.

My first appearance in London was at a dinner given by Lord Millstone to a few political friends, ostensibly with the object of imparting to them his "views" on the state of Europe, but in reality to discuss the merits of his new chief: an artist who, at a great sacrifice, and a large salary, had consented to accompany the noble stranger to a land of barbarians, where, according to his belief—the only belief he entertained—cooking was a thing unknown. To be a great politician it is not necessary that you should be a "grand politique," as Louis the Thirteenth called Cardinal Richelieu when he was dead, but you must at all events be a gourmand; and politicians of the calibre of Lord Millstone console themselves for their want of political knowledge by reflecting—when they do reflect—that some of the leading statesmen

of Europe have been the best dinner-givers: the first place in that rank being occupied by Prince Talleyrand, of whom Carême said when he died, that he took with him to the grave the greatest secret that ever man possessed—that of the receipt for a “ragoût de truffes à la Périgord,” a dish so magically compounded, that it made even the dumb to speak. Dumb enough in “the House,” Lord Millstone’s guests found the use of their tongues at his table, but only interjectionally until their appetites were sated, for it is a rule with all great eaters not to talk before they have had their fill. What they said then, is not, however, worth recording, and I merely mention this dinner because it was the precursor of hundreds exactly like it. If dinner-giving could prolong life, Lord Millstone might have lived for ever; but as dinner-giving has often an opposite tendency, it is not surprising that the noble lord should one day have been struck down by apoplexy.

It was not altogether the *salmi de perdreaux*, or the *pâté de foie gras*, that was in fault, though each of these dishes might have contributed in its degree; the actual catastrophe was caused by a paragraph in the government organ, wherein the probability was hinted at of a change in the ministerial policy on the subject of the paper duties.

Lord Millstone, when he dined alone, always sipped his port to the accompaniment of the evening journal of his predilection, and was thus engaged when his attention was caught by the following lines: “A deputation, consisting of the heads of some of the leading publishing houses in London, Edinburgh, and elsewhere, together with several eminent literary men, and others interested in the repeal of the taxes on knowledge, had an interview, this afternoon, with the First Lord of the Treasury, at his official residence in Downing-street. The views of the deputation having been placed in a very strong light by successive speakers, who dwelt on the impolicy of seeking to derive a revenue from taxing the efforts of the mind, and pointed out the educational advantages which would arise from the diffusion of cheap literature, the minister replied,”—did Lord Millstone read the words aright?—“The minister replied, that the question of the repeal of the taxes on knowledge was not to be debated on mere grounds of finance.” “Mere grounds of finance!” exclaimed Lord Millstone, laying down the paper with a trembling hand; “mere grounds! He could not have said so! Mere! Why is not taxation everything? How are we to conduct the business of the state, to provide for—*for everybody*, that is to say, for all of us, without taxation? And what, I should like to know, deserves to be taxed so heavily as a vile leveling revolutionary press? Things are come to a pretty pass when ministers adopt such a jargon as ‘taxes on knowledge!’ What else did he say, I wonder! Let us see!” Lord Millstone took up the paper again, and read on. “So far from this being the case, he (the First Lord of the Treasury) thought that it was a

high moral and political question, and concurring in most of the opinions expressed by the deputation, he trusted that the day was not far distant when an improved aspect of public affairs might present itself sufficient to justify a remission of the fiscal burdens which now weighed so heavily upon thought; being convinced, as he firmly was, that a free and cheap press lay at the root of all public and social improvement.” “A free and cheap press,” reiterated Lord Millstone, gulping down a glass of port wine and filling again. “Blasphemy and sedition!” another glass emptied and refilled; “everybody free to say what they like. Hone! Cobbett! Tom Paine! God bless my soul, the world’s at an end!” A third glass; but, before it was half way down, Lord Millstone was down, and the world remained unchanged. Half an hour afterwards, his lordship’s butler entered the room and found his lordship under the table, not drunk, but dead!

When George the Fourth—Lord Millstone’s kind and “gracious master”—died, his majesty’s white satin small-clothes lined with swansdown, together with the rest of his personal effects, were sold at public auction, as if with the object of paying his debts. On the death of Lord Millstone, who, thanks to his numerous sinecures, had contrived to keep out of debt, his valet came in for his wardrobe, and among his lordship’s changes of raiment I was considered sufficiently well preserved to figure as Mr. Tiptoe’s principal dress-shirt. I deserved this position, for it had been a leading feature of Mr. Tiptoe’s domestic policy—as I believe it to be of the domestic policy of valets in general—not to allow his late master to wear his best clothes oftener than could be helped. The word “reversion” is the pleasantest sounding word in a valet’s vocabulary, but of what value to the successor is it, if that which reverts be nearly in rags? A shirt, under such circumstances, can neither be worn nor disposed of—not proudly worn, I mean, nor advantageously disposed of—Mr. Tiptoe having both these objects in view. Mr. Tiptoe was equally fond of creating a sensation by his personal appearance, and of having money to spend. In appropriating Lord Millstone’s wardrobe, he made a compromise between his love of finery and his desire for cash. He kept me, consequently, for his grand occasions, and for his menus plaisirs he sold my companions. Unfortunately for those who love pleasure, pocket-money, however carefully expended, must one day be exhausted; and Mr. Tiptoe having, in the course of service, acquired many fashionable wants, found himself at last with nothing in his pockets. It is a common expression—significant of parting with the last thing you have—to say, of a generous man, that “he would give the very shirt off his back;” but with persons who are simply prodigal, the shirt is the first thing that goes when money is to be raised. In the absence of a shirt, a specious appearance may be preserved by wearing a false collar and buttoning the coat close up to the chin; Mr.

Tiptoe, when in extremis, became aware of this fact, and deposited me with the pawnbroker. As a matter of course, Mr. Tiptoe lost the pawnbroker's ticket, and at the expiration of a twelve-month-and-a-day, or some such mysteriously romantic period, I was sold off at a grande battue of unredeemed pledges.

My next proprietor was a dealer in second-hand articles of all kinds, whose customers did not go the length of having tailors, boot-makers, hatters, and shirt-makers, of their own, but, as it were, "chanced it," for any article of dress they might happen to require. To him came one evening a journeyman hairdresser, anxious, as he said, to "come it strong" in the way of fine linen, but desirous of doing so at the lowest figure for which fine linen was procurable. The hairdresser's reasons—need I say what Mr. Washball's reasons were for seeking this luxury?—well,—he was thinking of being married; to tell the truth, the lady had consented, the day was named, the banns were to be read for the third time on the following Sunday, and as Thursday had arrived, it was high time that Mr. Washball should give his mind to the necessity of procuring not the least indispensable of his wedding garments. The second-hand dealer, who made a point of selling everything under prime cost—that condition of things having no reference to the amount *he* had given—accommodated Mr. Washball by mulcting him of nearly a week's wages in exchange for my valuable self. Though the society into which I was thus thrown was not first-rate, I could not complain; for had I not been a prisoner for more than a year, and are not daylight and sunshine precious to the emancipated? Solitary splendour had been my fate while the slave of Lord Millstone; then came a gleam of liberty while I flaunted on the person of Mr. Tiptoe; but those hours of freedom, during which I saw something of the world, were dearly paid for, by my confinement in an obscure garret, a ticketed but unnoticed bundle. On Mr. Washball's wedding-day I was, to a certain extent, myself again; once more I rejoiced in the pleasures of those who were at once happy and innocent, and if Anna Maria, the bride, whose christian names were a stumbling-block to Alfred Washball, did not equal Aglaé in beauty, she was quite her match in light-hearted merriment. It was a satisfaction—my weakness must be pardoned—to be once more associated with white kid gloves and whiskers redolent of bergamot; but it was a greater satisfaction to me to be pressed as Alfred Washball pressed me to the throbbing bosom of Anna Maria, when the ceremony that ends in "amazement" had been duly performed, and we headed the procession that issued from the church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields on our way in cabs to the Waterloo station. Our destination for the day was Kew. We rowed on the Thames, Alfred, without coat and waistcoat, exhibiting me and his muscular energies in perfection; we made "the Gardens" our own, roaming through the rhododendron

vale, racing along the velvet turf, climbing the spiral staircase in the Palm-house, playing at hide-and-seek behind the trees—when Anna Maria was always caught by Alfred, and the two bridesmaids by their respective young men—and then returning to the Rose and Crown, we dined on "all the delicacies of the season;" or, if any were absent from the banquet, none of the party missed them, so perfect in everybody's opinion were all the arrangements.

I confess to having led a very agreeable life during my sojourn with Mr. Washball, and not the less so because I was much envied by my master's friends whenever I was worn. Anna Maria always looked to my washing, plaiting, starching, and ironing, herself: in fact, I held a place in her estimation not second even to the muslin dress which had arrayed her own fair form on the happy day at Kew. For the first twelve months of his married life Alfred was as proud of me as he could possibly be of anything made by hands; after that period, an object that naturally made its appearance usurped my place in his regard. Still I was not by any means neglected. At more than one christening I shone out in all my original splendour; when Anna Maria's next sister, Eliza, was married, to one of the hide-and-seek young men, I again appeared before the altar; I should no doubt have graced an event of a less joyful nature—the funeral of Anna Maria's father—but unfortunately I was unpegged from the clothes-line, and carried off by an unprincipled and unsympathising appropriator of other men's goods and chattels who caught a glimpse of me over the garden wall. And as that was the only obstacle between his desire and its accomplishment, it follows that I was forthwith stolen.

The gentleman who had thus surreptitiously acquired possession of my person, though he occasionally bore a fine historical name, was neither a member of the aristocracy, a legislator by law or popular choice, nor the proprietor of a large landed estate: in point of fact, he had no estate whatever, whether large or small, not so much as would fill a flower-pot; owning nothing more than the personal tenement covered by his hat, and not always the uncontrolled proprietor of that. But if not in either House of Parliament, he yet belonged to a numerous and influential body: being one of the class euphemistically described by the newspapers as "Members" of the Swell Mob. A first-rate linen shirt, though beginning to manifest some symptoms of the wear and tear that accompanies old age, instead of the traditional "honour, love, obedience, troops of friends," was a godsend to one in the position of the Honourable Percy Plantagenet Mowbray Fitz-Howard, as Mr. Thomas Rumball, alias "The Mizzler," at that time called himself. Allusion has already been made to the hermetical process by means of which the shirtless make a figure in society, and it only remains to be observed, that The Mizzler was an adept in art;

when he had a shirt, however, he made up for his compelled abnegation of show by the fullest display of his linen, adorned by studs of the purest strass. It was bad enough to have become the property of a thief, but I must confess that my pride was still more hurt by the reflection that I who, when I lived with Lord Millstone, had been decorated with real diamonds, should now be reduced to paste. I had, however, to reconcile myself to a great deal worse than this, while I continued in The Mizzler's possession. "Fronti nulla fides" is a maxim which they would have done well to remember, who, deceived by my respectability, imagined that anything respectable pertained to Mr. Thomas Rumball. Those guileless persons would not then have allowed that gentleman to button up their money, for safety, in their own trousers-pockets; nor have accepted their share of legacies which the unexpected heir was at a loss what to do with; nor have played at cards or skittles with one who knew nothing whatever of the game, and only joined in it for the sake of being good company; none of these things would they have done, could I—disgusted at the villany I witnessed—have warned them against my swindling master. But the wheel came "full circle" at last, nor was I sorry when it came; for though it introduced me to the last vicissitudes of a shirt's career, it released me from my degrading companionship with The Mizzler, who, when he was sentenced to four years' penal servitude, had to wear shirts of a very different material from the flax of Courtrai.

After that, I passed through several hands, but my memory is not very clear as to the order of succession. Of one fact, however, I am certain; that, after being tumbled out of a large and very promiscuously-filled clothes-bag, and being carefully inspected by a lady with strongly-marked Caucasian features, I was pronounced unmendable, and fit only to be cut up into pillow-slips: which state of life I was thereupon adapted to, considerably to the profit of Mr. Manasseh Moses, my last purchaser. A dreamy sort of existence was thenceforth mine, and a confused recollection for some years of a species of conversation which goes by the name of "curtain lectures." But pillow-slips are not eternal, and my constancy at length gave way—I mean, my texture. I then degenerated into as many dusters as my economical mistress could fashion out of my worn and wasted frame. I was tossed about here and there, crumpled, stained, made to do duty for everything. At length I degenerated to the last degree of which linen is capable, and once more found my way into a bag—but this time it was the rag-bag.

The era of tinder-boxes had gone by, or the last uses to which I might have been applied would have prevented my present revelations; but I was destined to throw a light on other things besides the domestic hearth. A higher and better lot awaited me. I contributed my weight to a heap of chiffons, and soon found that an existence of idleness, if mine could be called such, was my destiny no longer.

Along with my companions in misfortune, as I then thought—how differently I think now!—I was consigned to the hands of women: beings that bore little resemblance to Aglaë or Anna Maria: who cut me up into small pieces with their sharp knives, as if they sought to avenge themselves for the perfidy of the Honourable Percy Plantagenet Mowbray Fitz-Howard, whose victims many of them might possibly have been. We—I must needs speak plurally now—were then thrown into five or six different compartments of a large chest, according to our several qualities, my merits as a rag being as conspicuous as when I occupied a higher sphere. I must not conceal the truth. My pursuits as a duster had left me very dirty, and it was necessary that I should be washed. I had been in hot water—literally and figuratively—many hundreds of times, but my previous scaldings were nothing to the lustration I now underwent. A Turkish bath is a trial to the human frame, but it is a trifle compared with the searching ordeal of steam to which I was submitted. After the act of purification, came a renewal of the cruel treatment to which I had been subjected in my fibrous condition. As I had been combed and scutched in the earliest stage of my career, so I was hacked and scarified in my latest. My instrument of torture was a hollow revolving cylinder, the surface of which was furnished with a number of teeth—each sharper than a serpent's—so placed as to cut against other teeth that were fixed beneath. I say nothing of my sufferings under this process; let it suffice that the cutters never ceased from their work—as we lay well soaked in water—until they had divided every one of our filaments and mangled us into thin pulp; and all the while this torture was going on, we were deluged with chloride of lime until it became a part of our substance: the object of this commixture being to make us perfectly white. Our state of purgatory was at length over, and we were ready for translation to the paradise we now enjoy. As pulp, or, to speak technically, "stuff," we were poured into a large vat and kept at a moderate temperature by the heat of a stove: our fibrous matter being held in suspension by a continuous motion carried on within the vat by means of an apparatus, which, out of spite, perhaps, to Hebrew rag collectors, is called "a hog." A shallow square vessel covered with wire cloth, next received us, and the *deckle*, a very thin frame of wood, was fitted close upon the mould to keep us down, and limit the size it was meant we should attain. Then ensued the duties of the vatman, who dipped the mould into the vat, and having filled it with ourselves, the stuff, shook us about to distribute us equally, released us from the pressure of the deckle, drained us thoroughly, and then handed us over to another workman, called a coucher, who removed us from the mould and deposited us on a piece of woollen cloth or felt, there to remain until we were joined by others of our kindred and formed a lofty pile. But we were

still believed to be squeezable, and were therefore subjected to the attentions of the vat-press: a machine whose energies forced out of us every drop of superfluous water. We were finally dipped in size, hung up to dry, rolled flat and smooth, and the result—I speak for myself—was THIS SHEET OF PAPER.

Bound up with my predecessors in a work to which we have all willingly lent ourselves, I now hope, if not for rest, at all events for consideration: happy at its having so chanced that the first utterance of the pages I have formed should be a congratulation to the public on the removal of an oppressive duty, and a manifest improvement in an article whose utility can scarcely be limited.

UNREST.

SLEEP visits not these eyes, or draws anear
Coyly and mockingly, like tricky sprite,
Then, as my eyelids droop, my thoughts grow dim
Beneath her numbing fingers, forth she flits
And leaves me longing.

Oh the summer night

In all her awful stillness! Only those
Resigned to a familiar suffering know
How still she is and awful, note each phase
She undergoes 'twixt twilight and the dawn's
Celestial conflagration, making earth
All glorious as though God's "Fiat Lux"
Were newly spoke to Nature, who obeyed,
While man, false man, unworthy to take part
In the great colloquy, lies steeped and stilled
In slumber's present death.

Then as I lie

And through the open casement watch the moon
That steals along my bed, like luminous ghost,
Peopling my chamber with weird lights and shades
That come and go and shift and fade and change
In silence ere my vision can define
One perfect outline,—lying thus I seize
Some whisper of her mysteries, and all
My being thrills with a great nameless awe,
And trembling come upon me, and I feel
Like one who walking in his sleep awakes
And finds his erring steps have led him on
He knows not whither, and he hardly dares
To breathe or move, lest 'mid the unknown shades
There lurks some fearful secret, which should he
Unwittingly surprise, his doom is sealed.

Anon the moon drops down and darkness falls,
And one immeasurable blot engrosses all.

Then through the tree-tops coming from afar
A sound is borne along. Can Night herself
Be taking slumber, that her mighty breast
Emits this audible breathing? Faint and dim,
But regular it comes, with rise and fall
Like Titan pulses: imperceptibly
It swells and swells, and as it nearer draws
My own unresting heart can recognise
The unresting heart of Ocean in the throbs
That fill the dark with motion and a sense
Of an eternal sorrow, and a power
To conquer all except that mighty grief
That gnaws his heart, forbidding it to rest.

I listen still: my answering heart takes note
Of his advances: now I know he comes
To where the brown rocks thwart him, for his moan
Changes to awful anger, whose slow roar
And backward trailing rush are borne along
O'er inland valleys, whence no voice responds

But those of rippling streams which hurry on
With reckless, desperate love, to lose themselves
In Ocean's hungering breast, who has no love
Nor thanks nor heed for them.

Thus as I lie,

My brief, pale, little life, my puny pains
Fade into nothingness. To-night I live,
To-night I suffer: millions on the earth
To-night, too, live and suffer. One by one
We drop into our quiet little graves,
And there's an end of life and suffering
For us, we buried millions; while the Sea
We cannot tame nor conquer nor console,
The Sea who in that mighty power and mighty grief
Seems the connecting link 'twixt God and man,
Betwixt the finite and the infinite,
Still to the end of time shall speak those woes,
And countless generations still shall hear
And bow the knee and say, "God's will be done!"

FOOTPRINTS HERE AND THERE.

AUSTRALIAN MILK, AND WATER.

"I've brought your breakfast, ma'am," said my landlady, as she entered the room with a large tray full of things, and placed it on a box which was to serve for a table until we got our luggage from the ship. "I've fried some chops, and I've brought you some of my tea and sugar for this morning; here's a loaf, too. I've no butter, can't get none in Collingwood; maybe you'll get some yourself when you goes to Melbourne; it's three-and-sixpence a pound, I know. You don't want milk, I s'pose? People here mostly takes tea without; them as doesn't, drinks goat's. I doesn't though, for I think they are the most stinkingest animals in all creation."

Not liking tea without milk, coarse brown sugar, bread without butter, or fried mutton chops, my two little daughters and I quickly finished our breakfast, and made ourselves ready to go a marketing: not doubting for a moment that we should be able to obtain all we required, watercresses included.

After our long voyage, the idea of a walk in the country was delightful, so we decided on going first to the woman who kept goats.

"Them bits of parasoles won't be of any use this 'ot day," said our landlady, as we were leaving the cottage. "You'd better take your humbrellas."

The sun was blazing forth with immense power, so we followed her advice, but we soon found that umbrellas were as useless as parasols, for every now and then a strong wind that seemed to have passed over a hot furnace, came clearing all before it—we had to cling together to keep our footing—while clouds of dust enveloped us. The sandy ground was hot and uneven; bare rock, in many places, peeped out; and gnarled roots of trees stuck out of the earth, not having sufficient depth of soil to hide in. There was no grass, no herbage of any kind; the sight of a green field would have been inexpressibly refreshing to our bloodshot eyes. The trees looked old dry and shrivelled, having scanty foliage on their tops, and huge leafless limbs sticking forth, with strips of bark hanging like rags about them, and trunks hollow

and ant-eaten; there were no young branches dancing with joy in the sunbeams, hiding little nests of warbling birds in their rich clusters of green leaves. And yet it was spring-time.

In the distance there appeared to be a large pile of packing-cases, but, on closer inspection, we made out the packing-cases to be the dwelling-place of the old woman who kept goats; the habitation had a cask for a chimney-pot, and around it on the ground lay heaps of porter bottles and ale bottles, old boots and shoes, bones, rags, and other rubbish; on a line were shirts, pocket-handkerchiefs, and socks drying; five beautiful Cochon China fowls were scratching up some ants' nests near the stump of an old tree; and rows of ants in single file, like Chinamen when they travel, were marching off in all directions, heavily laden, each carrying an egg bigger than itself. On the top of some felled trees, a pretty little white kid had perched itself; it was nibbling the bark until we approached, when it suddenly bobbed its little head, darted about backwards and forwards, kicked up behind, cut capers sideways, and then leaping to the ground, bounded off to its mother far away.

No one seemed to be either inside or outside the hut, so, after waiting some time, we agreed it would be better to come another day. But somebody, quite close to us apparently, said: "Be aisy, now, and I'll be wid you." And an ugly bloated-looking visage, with a broad frill round it, suddenly appeared at a small opening in the building which served for a window. In answer to my request, it said, in a soft soothing tone of voice,

"And is it the milk you're afther? The Lord be wid you! Maybe you're a fresh hemigrunt, me blessin' an thim! and the counthrey's new to you?"

After telling her that we had landed in Australia only the day before, late in the afternoon, and that, understanding she kept a number of goats, we had come to her, wishing to have milk sent to us every day, she said:

"But it's precious little milk I gets out o' thim hanimals; its starving they is for want o' the grass that's all burned up, and they can't make milk out o' nothing at all; you're a mother yourself, I'm thinking. Long life to you! and sure, now, that's thrue, ivery word av it, ye know; its meself likes the dhrop o' milk in me tay, but divil a taste av it can I git no how; howsumdiver, I'll see what I can do for you to-morrow marning."

Vivid flashes of lightning, followed by heavy peals of thunder just over our heads, startled us, and, in spite of the excessive heat, we ran all the way home. We were fortunate enough to get within doors as the rain came pouring down in torrents, and streams of foaming waters came rushing down the hill behind our cottage—which was no impediment in their way, for it was built on sunken stumps of trees, and stood at least a couple of feet above the ground.

The storm continued throughout the night; but next morning the sun shone out again most splendidly, the air was delightfully cool

and refreshing, and tiny trickling streams of water wound their way down the hill.

A SIGHT OF ABORIGINALS.

I was lying on a sofa reading an entertaining book at an hotel in Geelong one day, when I was suddenly interrupted in my agreeable occupation by the landlady, who rushed into the room, exclaiming,

"Oh, do come into the bar. A number of natives are there, come down from the bush. You'll have such a sight of them!"

A large crowd, chattering in all sorts of discordant keys, surrounded us the instant we entered the bar, screaming out, "Giv saxpence! giv saxpence! giv saxpence!"

I was about to comply with their request, when my landlady whispered,

"Don't give them money on any account; they are sure to buy brandy with it, and it makes them mad. We should be fined fifteen pounds if we gave them anything but water to drink."

I thought I never had, in my life before, seen such ugly men and women; their skins were dark brown, almost black, and their features had an unfinished appearance, like those of a portrait just dead-coloured in; the women were uglier than the men, and seemed more abject. Each had a profusion of matted hair, all had jet-black eyes, and ill-shapen mouths. They were naked, with the exception of a dirty ragged blanket, which was worn as a cloak, or only wrapped loosely round the body. Presently, one man came out of the street into the bar with a waistcoat and a high-crowned beaver hat on, that somebody had just given him; he was very proud of these decorations, and strutted about finely. Then, coming close up to us, he held out a beautifully-carved club.

"Knock head, black man," said he, giving his own head a gentle tap with it.

"Then they can speak a little English?" said I to the landlady.

"He can," said she, "because he picks up a few words from the drovers, who employ him to find their cattle when lost."

A miserable-looking skinny old woman stepped out from amongst them, who had been bitten by a savage dog. The flesh was hanging ragged and jagged from her fingers, which she held up for us to see.

"Dogs never go mad in Australia, that's one comfort," whispered my landlady. Then, catching hold of my arm, and pulling me into a corner, she added, "Do you see that black fellow with a dirty red rag round his head?"

"That one with his shaggy black hair pulled out over the top of it?" said I. "He who looks as if he had two heads of hair, one on the top of the other?"

"Yes, that one. Would you believe it—that black fellow one morning saved my Jerry's life in this very bar? You must know that one night last rainy season, just as we had got warm and comfortable in bed, my poor Jerry was obliged to get up again to open the door

for a digger, come down from Ballarat, who wanted a night's lodging—the digger had slept on the wet ground the night before, poor fellow!—them diggers suffers a mortle lot, I can tell you, ay, that they do. Well! My Jerry slipped on his great-coat, for it was a hawful night, raining in torrents as it always does here if it rains at all. I'm sure I wonder he didn't catch his death o' cold, for he wouldn't put on anything else though I wanted him—'tween you and I, he's got a queer bit of temper at times, precious obstinate, like all the men, when he takes a thing in his head—well, he lets the man in, tells him to throw his mattress and blanket down in that corner, and follow him into the long room at the back where the travellers sleep. After that, he comes a shivering and a shaking into bed again. I never shall forget how his teeth did chatter, to be sure. My Jerry is an American, you know, and the cold cuts him up hawfully."

"An American!" said I, perfectly astonished, for I thought her husband was an African negro, and had often wondered how she came to marry him: she being a fine handsome blue-eyed Englishwoman. "Yes, yes, I know now," said I, on second thoughts; "you mean he was born in America."

"To be sure he was," said she. "That accounts for his complexion. Well! At five, up he gets as usual, and goes down into the bar to open the door and take the shutters down, for we had no man to help us then—couldn't get one for love or money—all up at the diggings, bless ye. Well! When he'd the heavy shutter in his hand, what should he see, think ye, but that native there, creeping into the bar; so, down he puts the shutter, flies into a dreadful passion, and kicks him out. Then he goes outside again, to take the other shutter down. Will you believe it now? That black fellow slipped into the bar again. Now it was hagggravating, wasn't it? My Jerry told me afterwards when it was all over, that it sent him into the most dreadfullest passion he ever was in in his life; so this time he catches hold of a stick—a good thick one, too, it was—and he rushes at that fellow, and that fellow leaps over the counter, and what do you think he clutches hold of? Why, a large snake. And Jerry declares he slapped his face with it."

"What! are there snakes about here, in Geelong?" said I, shuddering.

"Lord bless you, no! I'll tell you how it happened. The poor digger had slept on the damp ground at the side of his fire in the bush, the night before, and the snake, no doubt about it, had got into his mattress while he was fast asleep. But what a mercy, to be sure, it didn't catch hold of my Jerry!"

A JOURNEY TO SINGLETON.

Having a twelve hours' journey before us to Singleton—so, at least, we were told—where I had advertised a concert, to take place the day after, we, with our packed boxes, were getting very anxious and impatient for the arrival of

the conveyance we had ordered. It was an hour and a half past the time appointed by the driver for starting, and we had heard that the roads were dangerous to travel at night; so we stood at the window of our room in the hotel at Maitland, looking at the bare sandy plains that stretch themselves out in front, in anything but a contented frame of mind. The only conveyance to be had on that road was a small cart, with a seat on either side, an iron rail to lean against, and a door behind. At last we saw it coming down the road, and we at once hastened down to the door-steps to get into it.

After taking a wide circuit on the smooth sandy ground in front of the hotel, the whole time flourishing his long whip over the backs of the two poor lean horses harnessed tandem fashion, the driver of the little cart drew up before us proudly, and very much to the enjoyment of two or three pretty women who were leaning out of the bedroom windows.

He was a funny good-natured-looking little Irishman, with roguish grey eyes (that had the habit of looking two ways at once) under thick overhanging brows, and a mouth grinning from ear to ear. His arrival was the signal for a number of men belonging to the hotel and neighbourhood to gather round his little cart for a gossip, and to hear the news.

"The tap o' the morning to you, ladies," said he, raising his cabbage-tree hat half a yard, at least, above his head; then jumping down from his elevated position, he very gallantly assisted us into the cart.

"Those two boxes are ours," said I, pointing to them; "you must take great care of them, if you please."

"Boxes? You said boxes?" He stood scratching his head and considering. "Oh, ah! They must come afther us another day, that's all about it; it's intirely impossible to carry thim with us; they're too heavy far the hosses."

"But we can't go without them," said I.

"Y'up there!" he shouted to a stableman; "haist the boxes up here, ye dirty blackghuard; d'ye think I'm the man to lave the lovely craythurs' boxes behind? Gintly now, my boy, there's pink and white sarsenet gowns in 'em, and lace, and flowers, and feathers, and all sorts of fal-de-rals." And he leered at us, as much as to say, "I know who you are, you see."

We started on our journey at last, and Mike commenced cutting at the poor half-starved horses frantically. The weather was overpoweringly hot, and the road so rough and uneven that we were obliged to lay hold of the iron rail which went round the top of the cart to keep ourselves from tumbling out.

Mike was in excellent spirits, singing Irish songs the whole way he went:

"Bryan O'Lynn had no breeches to wear,
So he bought him a sheepskin to make him a pair;
With the skinny side out, and the woolly side in,
'They are pleasant and cool,' says Bryan O'Lynn."

At that moment the horses suddenly plunged into a gully, which stopped his song, and very nearly jolted us out of the cart.

"That's nothing at all to what we shall have to endure, far this road is full av thim owld gullies," said he, as soon as the horses were all right again.

One of my companions heaved a sigh like a groan, and another declared that her hands were already sore through clinging to the rail; but on we went, over stumps of trees, up and down hills, into gullies and out again: while Mike, in ecstasies of delight, cleverly threaded his way everywhere.

"By Gor! it's my belafe you'll all have the romantics; it's a shocking road, this. Just give us up t'other whip; it's undher the sate; I'll touchen up a bit. Now, Sultan, you baste! Get out there, Ginger! Now my little hosses, and be blowed to ye, what are you after there? Sure, now, you forgit's I'm behind ye." At last, exhausted with the exertion so heavy a whip required in handling so freely, he sat down, wiped his head and face with his pocket-handkerchief, and said to us, in a confidential tone of voice, "You mustn't be alarmed when you hears me a cussing and swearing; the devil himself couldn't git thim hosses on without it."

"A little corn would, perhaps," said I.

"Carn! Faith, that's undeniable. Carn would do it, sure enough; but that same carn's too dear far sich cattle. Now I'll tell you a story that's throe, ivery word av it:

"There was wonst a praste in a most dreadful rage with his coachman (a counthryman of mine he was), bekase of his swearing at the hosses he was a dhreven. 'Your rivirince,' says Dan, 'it's my belafe if your honor's holiness had these varmint afore ye you'd be obleeged to swear a bit too; they won't go no how without it, you see.' 'Tut, tut,' says his rivirince, 'I'll not believe it.' 'It's the thruth I'm spakin', be me sowl it is,' says Dan; but his holiness wouldn't belave a word av it, at all, at all. So he tuk the stränge in his own precious hands, and began patting the hosses with the whip, and saying, 'Be aff, my little hearties! Gee up, my Lady Mayoress!' (That was the name av one av thim, afther an owld sweetheart of his rivirince's.) Well, the hosses all av a suddint stopped, pawed the ground, and says they, 'We won't go home till morning,' or such loike; his rivirince geed up, and geed up, and at last he gits up and forgit's hisself. 'You cussed brutes, be aff wid you!' says he. 'From this time forth no man shall iver do penance for the loikes av you.'

"So I'm priviledgid," said Mike, with one eye shut. And at the same time he stopped in front of a miserable log-hut, which had a bottle, a glass, and an orange, in the window.

He was round at the back of the cart in an instant. We three got up, fancying we were going to alight.

"Prisintly, not yet a while," said Mike. I'm ownly wanting the bag av sassage; they're undher the sate. Hillo! Be aisy now wid 'em, or they'll all be thumbling out."

He quickly disappeared with the bag into the log-hut, and we, glad to rest after the jolting we had had, sat patiently waiting for him. We

had got into an interesting conversation, when roars of laughter within the hut attracting our attention, we saw the whole window filled with grinning faces, looking at us. Presently, out came Mike, followed by a smart broad-shouldered woman with a widow's cap on, screaming with laughter, and showing a splendid set of teeth.

"Lave aff making sich a disturbance," said Mike, himself one extensive grin. "Don't you see my shupayriors a lookin' at me?" He jumped up into his seat; the widow held a pannikin of whisky to him; he drank it off at a draught, whipped the horses, and away we went again, helter-skelter.

Mike every now and then cast furtive glances at us, and burst out laughing.

"Your friends were merry," said one of my friends, "and seemed glad to see you."

"I believe you," said he. "I've had sich fun! Be aff ye little hosses, now! You see they all says to me on goin' in: 'By the powers, Mike, you're in luck's way to-day!' 'You may say that, you may; and proud I feels,' says I; 'it isn't afther we gits the lovely craythurs on this road, anyhow; is it, my boys?' Upon that, the women all sets up a screaming out, 'If you don't tell us all about thim, they shall dhrive themselves all the rest av the way; and they tuk howld o' me, they did.' 'Is it murderin' you you'd be afther, far divarshin?' says I; 'bekase that 'ud be moighty p'lite afther bringing you the sassage.' 'Then tell us all about thim, at wonst,' says they, 'and we'll let go on you.' 'Well, then,' says I, 'they are the most wonderfulest craythurs I knows on in Australy. The one with the green feather in her bonnet quavers like a nightingal; the little un in the chimley-carnar av the convenience, warbles like a bullfinch; and the tother wargin does unpossible meandherings on a go-hanna."

The half way house now came in sight, and put an end to his description of us.

"We shall git a morsel av somethin' to ate here," said Mike, "if we're in time." So, he whipped his horses, and we arrived in front of the old hut, with a jerk.

In a room with nothing in it but a table and a few wooden chairs, we sat some time waiting, until at last a dirty overworked Irish girl brought a coarse joint of underdone beef, and placed it before us. Shortly afterwards, the mistress of the establishment made her appearance with a tin pan of boiled cabbage. We had just helped ourselves to some cabbage—for vegetables of any kind were a treat—when Mike, peeping in at the door, said, in a confidential low tone of voice, "Have you got your cloaks in the boxes? It'll come down prisintly, if ever it did. Whoo!" As he spoke, a flash of lightning was quickly followed by a heavy roll of thunder that seemed traversing the whole firmament; then down came the rain in torrents. "I towld you so! Be aisy now, and make yourselves comfortable while I have a smoke. I'll come prisintly."

For nearly an hour the rain continued falling.

We had some distance before us, and Mike didn't like the idea of driving in the dark; so at last we determined on starting in the midst of it, Mike undertaking to return the old cloaks we borrowed of the landlady.

By the time we had got comfortably wet through, a glorious sunset dispersed the heavy clouds, and made the sky brilliant with many colours. On we went, through forests of tall trees as straight as poplars, joining their foliage at top, and so forming canopies to pass under. A dray full of large pumpkins, drawn by six lazy bullocks plodding on, we quickly left behind. Then we met immense herds of cattle with drovers in a horrible state of excitement, swearing and smacking long whips, and hallooing to dogs, which were barking furiously, and rushing here and there after oxen that had run off in quest of water. A few miles farther, the air seemed infected by a horrible effluvia. "We'll see summ't prinsitly," said Mike, "whin we come to the crass roads." And sure enough we did then, and a wretched sight it was, too—the carcase of a poor bullock that had dropped in the middle of the road, from drought and fatigue; the sun had shrunk its skin, so that its skeleton could plainly be seen in many parts. Insects had already consumed most of its flesh, though it had lain there but a few days.

The sun had now sunk beneath the horizon. We yet had many miles to travel, and Mike openly expressed his dread of the darkness overtaking him; for then his horses might chance to stumble over thim confounded stumps of trees that *would* stick up just in the centre of the road where they oughtn't. We were journeying on at a snail's pace, when suddenly in the distance there appeared the light of a lamp. Mike joyfully whipped his horses. "The Lord be thanked!" he said, "we're all roight now; we've passed that owld chasim where I made sure I'd upset you."

In a few short moments we were at the hotel in Singleton, taking off our drenched garments in a pretty room decorated with white muslin curtains looped up with pink silk ribbons, while the handsome good-natured landlady was making tea for us in the room adjoining.

There was the delightful fragrance of fresh lemons everywhere, which was accounted for when I opened my bedroom window next morning. In the lovely garden beneath, stood a row of lemon-trees, as big as apple-trees in England, covered with ripe fruit, diffusing refreshing odours. The sun was rising in the west, making the air sultry with his mighty beams: while every flower, bush, and tiny twig, was sparkling with rain-drops.

RATHER INTERESTED IN RAILWAYS.

A COUPLE of months ago the English railway companies were mustering and joining their strength for an attack upon Lord Campbell's Act, which makes them liable for compensation to the nearest relatives of persons killed by ac-

cident arising from neglect upon their lines. Within those months there has been terrible slaughtering of passengers upon the Brighton and the Hampstead Junction Railways, slaughtering that would in each case clearly have been averted by a proper caution in the management. At any rate, therefore, the Brighton and the North-Western Companies will come before Parliament almost with wet blood on their hands if they join next session in the threatened appeal against an act that denies to them (and to all men, whatever their calling) a right to escape, when they cause death by carelessness, the penalty they have to pay when they cause only a wound.

Nearly coincident with Lord Campbell's lamented death was the award by a jury of heavy damages against the Great Northern Company to the widow of a Hertfordshire magistrate, killed by a fault upon their line. The author of the Act and its most powerful defender being for ever silent, the railway companies eagerly fastened upon an opportunity to set on foot an agitation which we trust was among the things crushed lately at Kentish-town and in the Clayton tunnel. But as we sincerely hope that the late railway massacres will be found very costly indeed to those answerable for them, so we fear that when the smart endured by the mangled victims has had its faint after-twinge in the pockets of directors, there will be revived and strengthened the desire of railway companies for the murder or mutilation of Lord Campbell's Act, so that it may again be, in all their disasters, cheapest of all to kill a passenger outright. Let us, therefore, be upon our guard; *this* railway risk, at any rate, the public itself has the power of averting.

We will set down in a few words the true state of the case. The act in question is so short that its whole contents are to be told in a few paragraphs. Before it passed—in the year 'forty-six—coach proprietors, railway proprietors, any persons or person, in fact, through whose negligence injury was caused to another, became liable to an action at law for money compensation, fairly proportionate to the money injury sustained. But if death were caused, the question was one of manslaughter, or homicide, and though the bread winner might have been taken from his children, though the most helpless, who are most in need of compensation, might have been deprived of their one support, there was no claim in law for money compensation. If a man's power of supporting his family had been, by the carelessness of another, and by no fault of his own, crippled, then the person in fault was required, as far as possible, to pay what would make good his loss of means; it was only when the man's power of support was, by the killing of him, withdrawn altogether, that there was an end of the matter, and his children might go to the wall.

This injustice was met, thanks to the late Lord Campbell, by a law. Dated the twenty-sixth of August, eighteen forty-six, it is called

"An Act for Compensating the Families of Persons killed by Accidents." The one good reason assigned for it in its preamble was, that no action at law had been maintainable against a person who by his wrongful act, neglect, or default, had caused the death of another person, although it was oftentimes right and expedient that the wrong-doer in such case should be answerable in damages for the injury so caused by him. Therefore it enacted in six clauses:

1. That in case of every such death, where, if the party injured had recovered, he could have maintained an action and recovered damages, the person liable was to remain liable notwithstanding the death; and although the death should have been caused under such circumstances as would amount in law to felony.

2. That every such action should be brought by the executor or administrator of the person deceased, for the benefit of that person's wife, husband, parent, or child; that the jury should award damages proportionate to the injury resulting from the death to those on whose behalf the action was brought, and that the amount was to be distributed in shares apportioned by the jury.

3. That there should only be one action in each case, and that it was to be brought within twelve months after the death.

4. That the defendant or his attorney should have full particulars of the claim made and the persons claiming.

5. The fifth clause explained the terms of the act, so that they should include the liability of companies and bodies corporate; and here also the word parent was defined to include father and mother, and grandfather and grandmother, and stepfather and stepmother; child to include son and daughter, and grandson and granddaughter, and stepson and stepdaughter.

6. The last clause gave the act immediate operation, and excluded Scotland from its provisions.

That is the whole act. The liability it creates is not confined to railway companies; is not, in that respect, in any way whatever circumscribed. Where the killed man contributed to his own destruction, damages are not recovered. Neither is the wounded heart of the widow or child to be considered in awarding compensation for the loss of husband or father. It is only required, that in proportion to the worldly loss inflicted by the death on those and on those only who were by nature dependent on or interested in the person killed by fault of another, shall be the claim for a worldly repair of the hurt done. The claim, too, is one that can be made only on behalf of those between whom the relation of dependence is the closest; between husband and wife, parent and child, or, at the remotest, grand-parent and grandchild. A niece wholly dependent on an uncle could claim no compensation for his loss even by the most atrocious recklessness of railway management. Obviously, therefore, Lord Campbell's Act, instead of pressing too harshly upon the railway companies,

allows some only of the claims that ought to be held good against them. Finally, let it be observed that the claim is dependent altogether upon proof that the accident which caused death was preventable.

The railway companies may say, That is no consolation to us, because ninety-nine in a hundred of our great accidents happen through fault in some of our servants. But the public only replies, Why do you not prevent the ninety-nine accidents in a hundred by being on the safe side in all your regulations, and compelling along your whole line, as you are morally bound to do, where life and limb depend on it, minute obedience to your orders? Very rarely, indeed—never, perhaps—has it been the uncontrollable fault of a single servant that led to a general disaster.

In the two cases that have lately fixed attention, no jury could lay the whole blame on the signalmen immediately concerned. In the Brighton accident three trains had been hurled quickly one after another from a main terminus, not one true to its time. In the Kentish-town accident the disaster befel an excursion train which had no fixed time for running, and for which, by people who were not expecting it, the way had to be cleared as it ran. The breakdown also arose from the failure of a boy of nineteen, at fourteen shillings a week wages, working, under no proper oversight, fifteen hours and a half and ten hours on alternate days, to perform the duties of a too responsible position. In either case the responsibility for shameful laxity of management is not to be got rid of by a censure of some humble servant of the company. And when has it been otherwise? Knowing how to prevent risks, the companies, even in spite of Lord Campbell's Act, are tempted to believe it best economy to run them. The act, however, has by this time taught some sharp lessons on the value of life to the railway boards. Impatient of these, they rose at last in rebellion against it, as we have said, about two months ago.

The occasion of the rebellion was as follows. In April of last year a gentleman from Hertfordshire, having a wife and nine children, and an unencumbered income of almost four thousand a year, was killed at the Hatfield crossing. Now this accident being caused by the snapping in two of a rail, and it being shown that the rail which broke was an old rail that, although cracked at each end, had been doctored and refitted with the unworn side upwards, the fault of the company was clearly proved. The jury then had to consider its award of compensation to the family. It was shown that the killed man died at the age of forty-one without a will. His eldest child was thirteen, and the youngest only two months old. The eldest son received, by the father's dying intestate the bulk of the property; the widow had a jointure of a thousand a year; the eight younger children had each a hundred a year during the mother's life, but at her death all passed to the eldest son. Clearly, therefore, the death deprived the younger

children of the education they would have had out of their father's means, of the probability of his provision for their future settlement in professions, and of any benefit they might have derived from his will. The jury awarded, as compensation, a thousand pounds to the widow, nothing to the eldest son, and fifteen hundred to each of the younger children. So that the Great Northern Company had to pay thirteen thousand pounds for a life lost through its attempt to save in a culpable way some thirteen shillings.

The award was made on the fifteenth of last June. Eight days afterwards, Lord Campbell died. He was hardly buried, when newspaper paragraphs began to inform the public that the late award of heavy damages had "had the effect of directing the attention of several gentlemen interested in railways to the importance of improving the law on the subject." There had been, in fact, a conference of chairmen of the principal railway lines (the "several gentlemen interested in railways"), at which it was resolved "that a future Conference should be held, at which all the railway companies of the United Kingdom should be invited to decide in what manner the question should be brought under the consideration of Parliament."

That conference has yet to be held, and there could be no time for it better than the present, no place for it better than the Clayton tunnel, where, if it were not a hundred thousand times too small for such a purpose, a meeting might also be held of several other gentlemen rather interested in railways, who might be invited to decide whether, as passengers, they would like a reduction of the terms on which they might be slaughtered.

In the face of the late accidents doubtless it may be thought by railway authorities good policy not to press the matter, as had been intended, at the next session of parliament. It may even be agreed—hopeless as the suggestion would seem—to wait for a comparatively bloodless year before making an application, of which the gist is to be—if we may gather it from the very few journals that were in this matter of one mind with the "several gentlemen"—that there shall be a reduction of the rates for killing men of fortune.

If Lord Campbell's Act is to stand, the desire of the railways is, that persons of worldly consideration may be killed on the premises of railway companies, not only at the shortest notice, but also at a great reduction of charge. The slender sums representing worldly compensation to the children or widow of a poor mechanic these rich companies do not so much mind paying; but they do flinch from what they have to pay when they kill men whose lives are of great money-value to their families. From all which, it clearly appears that the whole protection to be got by the public from the act lies in that part of it which the railway companies attack; that as men of all classes travel together, although the poor man would be little the safer for any anxiety that a great company would have lest it

should forfeit the sum that may represent the value of his labour to his family, he does benefit by the anxiety felt lest the loss of any possible Cæsus in the train should cause a crash among the dividends. The law is an equal one; the principle of compensation just alike to all: but it is only where, in its equal dealing, it can make itself most sharply felt in the company's treasury, that it is of value to a public rather interested in this matter as a wholesome check upon rash management.

STRIKING LIKENESSES.

NATURE has patterns which she sometimes repeats in her work; jacquard looms of her own, where she weaves two or three pieces of humanity, varied perhaps in material and colour, but of identical style and arrangement—pieces so much alike, indeed, they can hardly be known apart. Of such were the two slave boys whom Toranius, the great slave merchant of his time, sold to Mark Anthony, saying they were twin brothers, when, in reality, the one had been born in Asia and the other in Europe, and there was not a drop of related blood between them. Of such was Caius Bibius, Pompey's double; and the anonymous youth whom the august Cæsar saw as it had been looking in a mirror, so exactly like himself was he. Asked slyly by the Emperor if his mother had ever been to Rome, the anonymous youth as slyly answered, No, but his father had been there often. But as this anecdote is told of various other persons, perhaps the august Cæsar's living looking-glass is a mere myth, and never existed at all. There have been certain historical doubles, though, about whom there is no doubt, if very much obscurity. For instance, there was Smerdis the magian, a Persian counterfeit of royalty, who, when Cambyzes was away in Egypt and just before he died of that unlucky sword-wound at Ecbatana, boldly came forward as Smerdis, the brother—murdered by Cambyzes effectually enough some time before—and who managed so well, and was so very like the slaughtered prince, that when the king died he succeeded to the royal estate and dignities unchallenged. He was discovered at last by one of the numerous wives whom he had inherited together with the rolls of costly stuffs, the vessels of gold and silver, the apes, and the peacocks, and the rest of the royal chattels. She, in playful mood, lifting up his curls, saw—not ass's ears like Midas's, nor pointed and furry ears like Donatello's—but no ears. For the knave had lost them, not so very long before, for some trick unbecoming the magian calling. So Smerdis the magian came to the end of his farce; but he was marvellously like Smerdis the prince, for all that.

Then, there was Antiochus the Great of Syria, who had his double in one Artemon, whereby his wife Laodice was enabled to play a trick, and a very good one for herself; after the great man was dead, putting Artemon into the royal bed, and making him commend to the special care of his nobles and people, his faithful and beloved

spouse. Some writers say that Laodice murdered Antiochus, and took Artemon for her husband instead; keeping up the deception for above two years, so wonderfully like to the dead king was he. The best feature in old stories is, that you have so many versions, and all so directly contradicting one another, that you may make your choice according to your fancy; which is an historical luxury in general, extending even down to later times than the classical.

Coming into somewhat more intelligible company and on to firmer English ground, we find ourselves face to face with Jack Cade, who in the sixth Henry's generation spoilt a good and reasonable cause by giving himself out as Mortimer, whom he resembled, and who was believed in by thousands, not only as "the Captain of the Great Assembly in Kent," but also as the close relative of the House of York. He finally got himself and his pretensions fully settled by one Alexander Iden, who had no eye for likenesses. And in fourteen hundred and eighty-six, Lambert Simnel, well tutored by Richard Simon, priest, and backed by the Duchess of Burgundy, sister to the late King Edward the Fourth and aunt to the poor young murdered boys, set himself forward to play the part of Richard, second son of Edward, who, it was reported, had escaped from the Tower, and was now wandering through Europe. Finding this personation would not do, he then said that he was Edward Earl of Warwick; under which name he was warmly supported by the Irish people, who crowned him in Dublin Castle with the diadem taken from the Virgin, and publicly proclaimed him King Edward the Sixth. During the height of the craze, Henry caused the real Warwick to be led through London, that men might see the difference; but that did not prevent their saying that Henry's was the counterfeit and Lambert Simnel was the original; for could not every one see how much more like to the Plantagenets he was than Henry's mummer? Encouraged by so much apparent success, Lambert Simnel landed in England, prepared to carry all before him, but after one or two trials of strength was fairly defeated instead—the king, disdainfully enough, granting him a life which was too insignificant for his high mightiness to take. He made him a scullion in the royal kitchen, as about the most contemptible thing he could be; though afterwards he was raised to the more honourable post of falconer. There was a fine irony in Henry's treatment of the would-be king—that fragment of plebeian stuff which nature had wound off the loom in the likeness of the Plantagenets; and history would be less sad reading if all conquerors had been as contemptuous and as humane.

Six years after Simnel's defeat, the Duchess of Burgundy again brought forward a counterfeit presentment. This time it was Perkin Warbeck, or Osbeck, a handsome youth of fine parts, made even more like to the Plantagenets than Simnel had been; sufficiently like to personate to the life Lambert's first venture—young

Richard of York, who had been murdered by Sir John Tyrrell, as all readers of Shakespeare know. Perhaps Warbeck had a left-handed kind of right to be like the son of Edward the Fourth; for his beautiful mother had been honoured with much notice from king's majesty, given to honour pretty women with special and peculiar regard; and when she and her crafty, complaisant husband, the renegade Jew of Tournay, settled in England, they were so greatly patronised by court and king, that Edward actually condescended to stand godfather for the little Perkin, when that small Hebrew was made into a Christian. Rumour said, indeed, that he was the father without any godliness preceding. However that might have been, it is certain that handsome young Perkin was not only exceedingly like Edward's family, but also that he had something regal and distinguished in himself, and so was doubly fitted for his part. The Duchess of Burgundy sent him men and moneys, calling him her dear nephew, and the White Rose of England; Charles of France and James of Scotland espoused his cause, as did many gentlemen of note in England. James, indeed, gave him his own cousin, Lady Catherine Gordon, to wife, and more substantial, but not lavish, aid into the bargain. But fate and Lancaster were too strong for Warbeck and the Yorkists. At a great battle fought near Taunton he lost his army and his cause, was taken prisoner by the king, locked up in the Tower, and after some time of imprisonment executed, on the plea of breaking ward and plotting his escape. This is the last historical counterfeit presentment to be found in England.

In 1554 was born Sebastian of Portugal, posthumous son of Don John, and heir to the crown; and in 1578 he led his men at the disastrous battle of Alcaçar, when Christians and Moors hacked to pieces thousands of the divine image in honour of the God who made them. After the battle, Sebastian was missing: some said he was dead; others, taken prisoner; but the general belief was that he had been slain, though, to be sure, there was just the chance of the prisoner theory. Sufficient chance to encourage a host of adventurers, all more or less like the missing youth, all wanting one eye, all of the same complexion and stature as himself, and all owning their adherents from pure conviction, as well as from design and crafty insight. First, there was Gabriel Spinosa, the one-eyed cook of Madrigal, who, in 1585, got even Doña Anna of Austria on his side, and prevailed on her to give him her jewels, by which means he was arrested, it being thought more than suspicious that such a ragged robin as he should have regal jewels for sale. Yet he was strangely like the princely Sebastian, one-eyed cook though he was. Then there was the son of a tiler at Alcobaca, with two notable adherents, Don Christopher de Tavora and the Bishop of Guarda. This tiler's son of Alcobaca had been a man of loose life and more than doubtful morals, who had become converted, and then turned hermit; but, being exceedingly

like the lost Sebastian, he had been got hold of by the knight and the bishop, and persuaded to act the part of the prince redivivus. He did not succeed, but got sent to the galleys for life, while the bishop was hanged for a treasonable plotter as he was. Of the knight's future not much seems to be known. After him came Gonçalo Alvarez, the son of a mason, who generously granted the title of Earl of Torres Novas to a rich yeoman whose daughter he wanted to marry—raised a body of men, and gave the government a few days of anxiety. He was soon disposed of, like the rest; but under a severer sentence, as he had been more troublesome than they. He was hanged and quartered, and the Earl of Torres Novas was deprived of his dignity and estate, and left shivering in social nakedness, exposed to the ridicule of the world. But twenty years after the battle of Alcaçar, namely, in 1598, came one, about whom history is even yet undecided—a kingly-looking man, noble in spite of poverty and the deep lines of suffering like scars across his face—who presented himself at Venice, saying that he was Sebastian, so long thought to have been slain at Alcaçar, but who had been taken prisoner by the Moors instead, and kept in close ward for all these weary waiting twenty years. He gave a very likely and detailed account of himself when examined by the Venetian nobles deputed to try him, and showed great firmness, piety, and patience, as might have been expected from a prince who had been so severely tried; he knew all the secrets of the palace and the royal family; was exceedingly like what the true Sebastian would have been after twenty years of affliction and privation; had all the bodily marks and personal peculiarities of the prince; and was, in short, so dangerously possible, that the Portuguese authorities were uneasy, and got him ordered out of Venice, afraid to have him any longer in public view. When banished from the Queen of the Adriatic he went to the Queen of the Plains, and took refuge in Florence. But the grand-duke gave him up to Count de Lemos, the viceroy of Naples, by whom he was imprisoned in the Castle d'Ovo, every now and then brought forth and exhibited to the people—the officer in charge of the exhibition crying out, "This is the man who calls himself Sebastian!" "And I am Sebastian," would sometimes answer the patient, proud, and kingly-looking prisoner. From d'Ovo he was sent to the galleys, thence to San Lucar, and thence to a castle in Castile, where he disappeared from history, and no one ever knew what became of him. If he was not the true Sebastian, he was the most remarkable of all the false presentments to be found in history.

Of false Demetriuses in Russia there were many. Demetrius, the son of John Basilowitz, Czar or Grand-Duke of Muscovy, had been murdered by the order of Boris Gudenow in the early part of 1600. But it was found convenient for certain men to say that he had not been murdered, and if there was a like-

ness anywhere, it was made the most of. The most famous of the false Demetriuses was the monk Otrafief, a fine, brave, handsome fellow, run off the same jacquard loom as the slain prince, who gathered together a large army with which he defeated his enemy Boris Gudenow, who thereupon killed himself, as the best thing he could do for mankind. Otrafief was crowned at Moscow by the name of Demetrius the Fourth, or Fifth, as historians choose to recognise or ignore that other Demetrius some three hundred years before him, and began his reign so well, that even those who thought within themselves, and those who knew for certain, that he was only a shabby monk and no Demetrius at all, held their tongues, finding the new state of things quite sufficiently to their liking to buy their silence. But usurpers seldom prosper. In a short time, Demetrius Otrafief gave way to such cruelties and excesses that mankind, as embodied in the Muscovites of 1605, could bear him no longer. On the day of his marriage with the daughter of the Vaywode of Sendimir, one of his first and most influential adherents, a party of conspirators burst into the palace and slew him; and then the fact was publicly proclaimed that he was only the monk Otrafief, and no more the true son of John Basilowitz than Boris Gudenow himself. Then, in 1773, one Pougatschoff must needs give himself out as Peter the Third, whom the imperial Catherine had good reason to know was sleeping safely in his last sleep, carefully put out of her royal way. He seized the fortresses in the county or district of Orenburg, assembled a goodly army, and might have given the royal murderess no end of trouble had he not been betrayed by some of his followers, and given up to the enemy. He was put into an iron cage, and so carried to Moscow, where he was first shown in derision to the people as a bad likeness of the dead Peter, and then executed, January, 1775. Yet he was a counterfeit presentment of no such very grotesque forms, and quite sufficiently like the original to deceive men with more faith than discernment.

Of the false Dauphins who have troubled France since the death of poor little "Louis Capet," we have not much to say. They were rather impostors and adventurers than counterfeit presentments, none of whom were very successful in their attempts, and none of any special mark or political significance. The chief person worried by them was the poor Duchesse d'Angoulême, with whom they all, naturally enough, claimed relationship and knowledge. For the rest, they were only laughed at by the public, and locked up when they became too intrusive and annoying.

But some of the strangest instances of this double likeness are to be found in private life; and the history of the false Martin Guerre is one of the strangest of all. In the middle of the sixteenth century one Martin Guerre, aged eleven, was married to Bertrande de Rols, aged seven, both of Artigues, a little village near Rieux, the "chef lieu" of Haute Garonne. In

due time they had a child, and all went on happily enough, till one day, when of the ripe age of twenty-one, Martin stole some corn from his father, and, in fear of punishment, silently absconded. For eight years Martin Guerre was dead to his family. They never heard of, or from, him; letters in those days were few, and travellers scarce; and Martin Guerre had passed out of the little world of Artigues as if he had never been. Suddenly, one day, he reappeared. As he had been absent for eight years, he was not quite the same man as when he went away; but it was he sure enough—the same marks on his face and hands, the blood-spot in his left eye, the two tusks in the upper jaw, the broken nail of the first finger, the three warts on the right hand, and another on the little finger, as well as the scar on the right eyelid, and the pit which an ulcer had left in his face; signs by which all men might have known Martin Guerre among a thousand. Besides, when he spoke to Bertrande de Rols, the wife, he knew all the secrets lying between them; who the wedding guests had been, where a certain suit was, or ought to be, of which Bertrande herself knew nothing; with some other small mysteries nearer and dearer still. Bertrande had not a doubt that this was Martin's very self: nor had her own immediate relations, nor had his uncle, nor his four sisters. The lost was certainly found, the prodigal publicly repentant, and all Artigues rejoiced with the pretty young wife at the return of her vagrant. So the matter stood for three years; two children were born to the pleasant couple, and though they were strangely unlike Sanxi, Martin's first child, no one thought any the worse of them or their mother for that. But at last, a little, half-inarticulate whisper got abroad, which soon swelled into a loud and angry cry, and the whisper was: "This is not Martin Guerre, but Arnauld du Tilh." The Martin of the past, said some, was taller and darker, of more slender build, bow-backed, high-shouldered, with a cleft in his chin, and a large and flat snub nose; while the Martin of the present, for all his personal marks, had none of these more important characteristics; and especially, his nose was neither large, nor flat, nor snub. When the sluice was once opened, the waters rushed in. All sorts of differences and discrepancies were seen and commented on; and, at last, the cry grew so loud and fierce, that poor Bertrande, who had been the last to give in to the storm, was forced to bow to it. She was made to undertake a prosecution against the man who, for three years, had been to her as Martin Guerre, citing him to appear as Arnauld du Tilh, to answer to the charge of false personation—with other crimes yet more grave and serious. Many witnesses were called on this strange trial: some for, more against, the identity of Arnauld du Tilh with Martin Guerre. One said that Martin had been notoriously skilful in certain games, of which Arnauld knew nothing; another—this was Jean Espagnol, landlord of a little inn not far distant—said that Arnauld had confessed to him

that he was not Martin Guerre at all, but only Arnauld du Tilh, beseeching him not to betray him, Arnauld adding that Martin had made over to him all his goods and his rights: whereat Bertrande grew red and bridled. A third said that he had known from the first that the accused was Arnauld du Tilh, and not Martin Guerre, but that he had had a sign not to betray him; so said another, adding that he, the accused, had given him two handkerchiefs for his brother, Jean du Tilh. A soldier, newly arrived from Rochefort, accompanied by two other witnesses, deposed that the true Martin Guerre was in Flanders, with a wooden leg in place of the one he had lost before St. Quentin. Others said that Martin was a Biscayan, and could speak the Biscayan dialect, of which Arnauld was profoundly ignorant; and a few called the attention of the judge to the striking difference between Sanxi, the true Martin's acknowledged child, and the two infants born of the false. On the other hand, Martin's uncle and four sisters testified in Arnauld's favour, and swore positively that he was Martin Guerre and none other, and that the various witnesses against his identity were mistaken, or suborned. In this manner the excitement was kept up, and public opinion very fairly divided, for some time; when suddenly the true Martin Guerre came upon the scene, and complicated matters still more. For Arnauld was not to be outwitted easily. He turned round against Martin, and denounced him as the impostor; and for a time justice was undecided as to the real criminal. But proofs were too strong. The few dear secrets by which Arnauld had been helped to win pretty Bertrande, Martin confessed he had confided to him; also the secret of those white-lined blue breeches in the chest, of which Bertrande herself knew nothing, and the knowledge of which had seemed to her so conclusive. The game was up. Martin was immensely offended with his friends, and grievously indignant that his wife had been deceived; the law was sharp in those days, and neither Martin nor the law understood much of mercy. Arnauld du Tilh was convicted of perjury and imposture, and these were crimes of which men were jealous. Wherefore he was sentenced to do penance, standing in a white shirt, bareheaded and barefooted, having a rope round his neck and a lighted taper in his hand, thus to ask pardon of God, the king, and of justice, also of Martin Guerre, and Bertrande de Rols, his wife; after which the executioner was to lead him through the most public streets and roads about Artigues, and then he was to be hung up by the cord round his neck on a gibbet erected before Martin's house. And when he had hung long enough he was to be cut down, and his dishonoured carcase burnt. His one surviving child by Bertrande was to inherit all his goods: which, however, were not many. Arnauld du Tilh played with edged tools, and he cut his hands grievously in the process.

In 1649 died Lancelot le Moine, leaving his three children, Pierre, Jacques, and Louis, under

the sole guardianship of his wife, Jeanne Vacherot. About four years after his death Jeanne went to an estate she had at Vernon, taking with her the youngest child, little Louis, but leaving her elder two, big boys now of ten and fourteen, under the care of their grandmother and a faithful old servant. One day the two boys went out to play with a companion named Coustard: but though they went out, they forgot to come in again, for all three urchins ran away to see the world, leaving parents and guardians in a beautiful state of uncertainty and excitement. A short time after their flight, Jeanne Vacherot saw, sitting on the steps of the Hôtel Dieu, a boy so exactly like her son Jacques, that she went to the police of that time, making a statement of her loss, and adding her belief that the little beggar-boy of the Hôtel Dieu was her son. On further examination she dropped her claim, and went back to Vernon. The beggar who was called Monrousseau, and the child who was Jacques le Moine's double, went there too; and soon the whole neighbourhood was in an uproar. The people all said that the child was Jeanne's: Jeanne Vacherot said it was not, for all its fair hair, and the mother's mark, so exactly like that on the missing Jacques. Besides, Jacques le Moine was a well-educated lad for his years, and little Monrousseau, the beggar, could not read or write. But this was held to be no proof at all. Indignant at Jeanne's heartlessness, some of the neighbours, having first nearly killed her, instituted an action against her, to make her acknowledge her child, the little beggar; and though Jeanne was ably defended, yet she lost her cause from the overwhelming testimony brought against her. Twenty-one witnesses swore to the identity of this little beggar-boy with Jacques le Moine. Servants, tradespeople, one or two kinsfolk, the surgeon who had made a certain cicatrice upon his body, the farmers on the mother's estate, in short, every one who had any idea on the matter at all. Only Jeanne stood out that he was not her son, and Monrousseau stood out that he was his. The other side won; and the decree was hard enough, considering what the truth was. Claude le Moine, brother to the defunct Lancelot, was ordered to take the boy to his heart and home. Jeanne was made to grant him a pension of a hundred livres; but to mark the disapprobation of her unmotherly conduct, she was deprived of all maternal privileges and rights over him. Monrousseau, the beggar, was imprisoned and heavily ironed for the crime of stealing a well-born child, and hiding the truth when he had the opportunity of undoing his wrong; and for three years this wise arrangement was in full force. Jeanne and her kinsfolk, kept "in silence," that is, not allowed to appeal; Monrousseau kept in prison and irons; and the little beggar-boy kept in luxury and unhappiness. And then vagrant Master Jacques, the real son of Lancelot le Moine and Jeanne Vacherot, returned, giving a pitiful account of his three years' wanderings, and poor elder brother Pierre's death. Where-

upon Justice was forced to make amends; which she did, but as surlily as possible; releasing Monrousseau from prison with a sulky pardon for no crime done, and enjoining him to bring up Louis as his son, Louis being enjoined to obey and consider him as his father: neither of them having ever wanted anything but the right of considering themselves father and son. Claude le Moine was released from his enforced guardianship over the little beggar-boy; and Jeanne Vacherot had her hundred livres restored to her.

There was another very curious case of mistaken identity in France. A Calvinist family, named De Caille, were exiled from Provence at the time of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. They were people of standing and condition, owning a good property, which, when the law of 1689 was passed, that all those absent from the kingdom on account of their religion should forfeit their estates to their nearest relatives, passed into the hands of a Dame Anne Rolland and a Dame Tardivi, as the nearest inheritors of Dame Judith la Gouche—Madame de Caille. In process of time sundry members of the Caille family died at their new home in Lausanne, and among them the eldest son, Isaac de Rougon, a studious, consumptive young man of thirty or so, leaving De Caille now absolutely heirless—if haply, indeed, any son of his would have constituted himself the heir by renouncing his father's faith, and becoming a Catholic for the sake of gain. A few years after the death of this Isaac, and when the Rollands and the Tardivis were furthest from dreaming of any disturbance, a man known elsewhere by the name of Pierre Mège, a marine soldier of no very delightful antecedents, came before the authorities, giving himself out as De Caille's eldest son, so long reported dead. He had not been dead at all, said Pierre Mège, Sieur de Rougon; on the contrary, he had been kept locked up by his father for many years, the old man having the intensest hatred to him, because of his inclination for the Catholic faith. He had, however, managed to escape after repeated trials and increased severities; and he gave a strange account of himself since that escape. He acknowledged that he had passed by the name of Pierre Mège, whom he had known on board the *Fidelle*, where they had both served, but where he was distinguished by the sobriquet of "Le Grenadier sans regret;" acknowledged, too, that he had passed as Pierre Mège with Honorade Venelle, the wife, she knowing of the deception all the time, and helping to keep it up—the friends, creditors, and relatives of the true Pierre accepting him without reserve or suspicion. But now the time had come when it was his duty to throw off this pretence of Pierre Mège, this false mask or larva that hid his true features, and come forward boldly to claim his rights as André d'Entrevergues, eldest son and heir of le Sieur de Caille. The lawsuit that ensued is too long to dissect here. The most startling points in it were, that this pretended heir could neither read nor write; that he gave himself a wrong

name—the name of De Caille's eldest son being Isaac de Rougon, and not André d'Entrevignes; that he did not know his father's proper name or titles, nor his dead brother's, nor his mother's; nor his sister's age, height, complexion, or name; nor the name of the street, or number of the family house at Manosque, in Provence, where he was born and had lived up to quite intelligent boyhood; nor the name of the house at Lausanne; nor any circumstance whatever connected with the family: in short, he seems to us, on reading the report, to have been the most clumsy and transparent of humbugs and adventurers. But he explained away all these discrepancies and appearances, and so cleverly too, that he got the parliament of Provence and above four hundred of the most respectable people of Manosque on his side. The parliament declared him the rightful heir of the heretic De Caille, and, on his public baptism into the bosom of Holy Church, formally installed him into the De Caille possessions, hitherto held by the Rollands and the Tardivis.

But M. Rolland was a lawyer and a man of spirit. He carried the thing to Paris, where heads were clearer and wits sharper than in the provinces; and one of his first successful moves was to hunt up Honorade Venelle, whom he counted on as his best ally. For Pierre Mège, or Isaac de Rougon—he had learnt his own name by this time—had married a pretty girl of Manosque, sister to one Serri who had secretly helped him through the process; and M. Rolland knew that no Honorade Venelle in the world could see that bit of chicanery without protest. And M. Rolland reasoned rightly. In spite of the one hundred and thirty ocular witnesses, and the three hundred by hearsay—who testified to the identity of Pierre Mège with the dead Isaac de Rougon—truth, Honorade's indignant denunciations, baptismal and mortuary documents, and a thousand little ugly corners left unsmoothed, and gaps unfilled in Pierre's evidence, set the matter on a new basis. The Paris parliament undid the work which the Provençal had built up. The Tardivis and the Rollands were reinstated; the poor little Serri girl was decreed to be nor maid, nor wife, nor widow, while to the loud-voiced, red-faced Honorade were assigned all the honours of matrimony and matronhood; Pierre Mège was adjudged thief, perjurer, bigamist, and impostor, dispossessed of his ill-gotten wealth, and finally sent off to prison, where he was to be seen for many years after—a shy, sullen, stupid fellow, who would never say or confess to anything, and who hid an immense deal of craft under the appearance of profound stupidity. The chief points of identity between him and Isaac de Rougon had been in certain accidental marks, specially a mark round the left ear, which was by no means common. For the young De Caille had been born with one ear

fastened to his head, and the surgeon had released it by cutting it through. Strangely enough, Pierre Mège had precisely the same kind of cicatrice round his left ear, beside other personal signs not usually found so exactly alike in two different men. A few things, too, on his adversaries' side seem to indicate fear of his cause, such as M. Rolland's suppression of certain facts that might seem to tell against his case, his proved subornation of witnesses, and the ill-refuted charge of his attempt to poison the persistent claimant.

There was another very curious story of Count Beneventa's servant, who was claimed by a certain man as his brother, joint-heir with himself of their dead father's property. But though the offer was tempting and the opportunity rare, the man was not to be persuaded out of his identity, and refused the brother, and the mother, and even the dead father's goods, and stood by his true and real self, "to the admiration of all beholders." After all, it must be one of the most disagreeable things in the world to have a second self—another "William Wilson" stalking through life as one's shadow. It is bad enough to have to bear the consequences of one's own follies and misdeeds: if those follies and misdeeds were multiplied by two, the burden upon some of us would be heavier than we could possibly support.

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